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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 24th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (continued) (A/46/34, 89, 219)

1. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, recalled that at its 10th meeting the Fifth Committee had agreed to the Chairman's proposal that the current item be considered on a biennial basis, a procedure which was in line with the suggestion put forward by the Twelve with the aim of streamlining the agenda and rationalizing the Committee's work. That proposal, which would involve postponing consideration of the substantive aspects of the item to the forty-seventh session, was prompted by the conviction that consideration of the valuable reports of the Joint Inspection Unit could be undertaken during the discussions on the agenda items to which they referred.

2. The desire to postpone consideration of the item should not be interpreted as an indication that the Twelve did not attach importance to the work of the Joint Inspection Unit - on the contrary, they wished to encourage it to increase its output, preferably in the form of selective and concise reports, and to continue its dialogue with the General Assembly on the formulation and implementation of its programme of work.

3. The Twelve welcomed the improvements in the presentation of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit and urged it to enhance the usefulness of its reports to the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system and to keep the implementation of its recommendations under close scrutiny whenever possible. The Twelve were willing to participate constructively in any informal discussions of the current agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 115: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/46/370, 377; A/C.5/46/2, 4 and Add.1, A/C.5/46/7, 9, 13, 16, 21)

4. Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand), speaking also on behalf of Australia and Canada, said that staff were the Organization's most important asset and had responded with vigour and professionalism to the new demands placed on the United Nations. The importance of staff was also reflected in the substantial sums allocated to staff expenditure in the budget. Although the reductions in staff called for by the General Assembly at its forty-first session had been achieved, the long-term recommendations of the Group of 18 remained relevant and would continue to serve as guidelines for future work.

5. Both the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had highlighted the need to review the structure of the Organization in order to equip it to meet the new demands placed on it. It was to be hoped that the many discussions being held on strengthening and streamlining the activities of the Secretariat would make it possible to draw up firm proposals capable of securing the support of the General Assembly. Further measures were needed to simplify the structure of

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(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

the Secretariat and improve coordination between its various units so as to avoid duplication of work, in accordance with the recommendations outlined by the Group of 18.

6. The Secretariat must give top priority to recruiting outstanding personnel. In that connection, it was regrettable that, in the past, posts in the Secretariat had been filled by candidates from a relatively limited circle of persons connected in some way with the Organization. In view of the extensive problems which that practice could generate and the need to recruit highly skilled staff, it was vital to extend and improve selection procedures. The Governments of the Member States could contribute to that objective by providing timely information in their countries about vacancies in the Organization and by promoting a positive public perception of the United Nations and its work.

7. The Secretariat had considerably improved its recruitment procedures in recent years. A practice which had proved very effective in that respect had been the holding of national competitive examinations to recruit at entry level well-qualified young people looking for careers as international civil servants. That method had also been successful in increasing personnel numbers from those Member States unrepresented or underrepresented in the Secretariat. Nevertheless, some delays were occurring in the recruitment of candidates who had been successful in the national competitions.

8. Recruitment by competition should not be confined to junior Professional staff but should apply to all staff, particularly senior officials, to whom the Secretary-General had been delegating a large number of tasks in recent years as his responsibilities increased. Special care should be taken in the selection of senior officials since their performance directly affected the quality of work of all those under their authority. With that in view, from 1992 onwards the new Secretary-General should apply the selection and recruitment procedures for the appointment of officials at the highest levels of the Secretariat outlined the previous year by the Australian, Canadian and New Zealand delegations.

9. He hoped that the secondment procedures applied by certain Member States during the previous 45 years were now a thing of the past and that the new provisions on the subject would be used constructively to further the aims of the United Nations. Secondment of officials from national civil services, academic institutions, private industry or other United Nations organizations would provide the Organization with resources that it might not be able to develop internally. On the other hand, secondment of United Nations officials to other organizations should also be encouraged and appropriate methods found for evaluating and promoting such officials while they were serving outside the Secretariat.

10. To enable officials to utilize their talents fully once recruited, an effective system of career planning and staff training needed to be established once and for all with provision for job diversification and

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mobility within the Organization. Due attention must also be given to the representation of women in the Secretariat. He welcomed the increased concern shown by the Secretariat in career development, particularly in the General Service category. It must be remembered, however, that training was not an end in itself but should be geared to maximizing cost-effectiveness.

11. Promotion opportunities had been to some extent limited by the reduction in the size of the Secretariat. Conditions of service and career prospects were crucial to the Secretariat's ability to attract and retain the best qualified staff. Nevertheless, proposals to expand promotion opportunities should be looked at very carefully to ensure that they did not overload the system still further and undermine the economies so far made. The greater the degree of staff turnover, the easier it would be to respond flexibly to the new tasks required of the Organization.

12. As recommended by the Group of 18, it was important that strict and clear criteria should apply to the promotion of staff at all levels in the Secretariat. In that connection, he looked forward to the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly the following year on the formulation of a comprehensive career development plan, which, as indicated in General Assembly resolution 44/185, should establish adequate, equitable and transparent promotion procedures where merit was recognized as the fundamental criterion.

13. A further vitally important aspect of personnel management was an efficient internal system for the administration of justice, as a counterbalance to administrative decision-making. In that respect, important reforms had been introduced in the Secretariat since 1987 with which Member States should be well pleased.

14. On another issue, serious consideration should be given to the proposal to biennialize consideration of personnel questions with a view to improving the efficiency of the Fifth Committee's work. Such a rationalization of its programme of work would enable the Fifth Committee to focus more clearly on consideration of the budget in alternate years and would allow the Secretary-General more time in which to respond to the General Assembly's requests for information on personnel matters.

15. Another problem which warranted special attention concerned the increasing number of Secretariat staff who were serving under dangerous conditions. Although the number of cases of arrest, detention or abduction of staff members had decreased slightly during the past year, it remained a source of great concern. Violations of the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations could lead to a situation in which it was impossible for the United Nations to fulfil its mission. He joined previous speakers in calling upon the Governments of all Member States to respect their obligations in the matter.

16. Mr. AYOUB (Afghanistan) considered that the composition of the staff of the United Nations system should reflect a balanced and equitable geographical distribution, in accordance with the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. Despite the many efforts which had been made in that direction, the situation had not improved sufficiently. The recruitment of staff from unrepresented or underrepresented countries must increase; the competent authorities should take special measures to help the countries in question to secure an equitable geographical distribution.

17. As far as respect for the privileges and immunities of United Nations officials was concerned, Afghanistan had always complied with the relevant provisions and, despite the situation of conflict prevailing in the country, it had made every effort to ensure the security of the staff of the United Nations system. However, while Member States had an obligation to safeguard the security of United Nations staff, staff members also had an obligation to refrain from abusing their status by engaging in activities which threatened the national interests of Member States. In that connection, it should be noted that the three Afghan nationals whose names were mentioned in the Secretary-General's report and against whom incontrovertible evidence existed had already been released; consequently their names should be removed from the list appearing in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/46/4). Afghanistan would continue to make every effort to guarantee the security of the staff of the various organizations of the United Nations system and to provide them with proper working and living conditions.

18. With regard to the question of the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat, his delegation particularly welcomed the measures which had been taken by the Secretary-General during the period from July 1990 to June 1991. It was essential that women should at last enjoy equal opportunities with men in the Secretariat of the United Nations.

19. Mr. DINU (Romania) said that, although the current year was one in which the Fifth Committee ought to have been concentrating on the question of the budget and considering personnel questions only in general terms, the importance which Member States attached to the item was so great that personnel questions were in fact being considered in detail every year.

20. The comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/46/370) contained valuable statistical information, and he noted the efforts which the Secretariat had made to reduce the number of unrepresented and underrepresented Member States. However, those efforts did not appear to have been sufficient, since a considerable number of Member States remained unrepresented or underrepresented even though a comparatively large number of nationals of some of them had been recruited. Perhaps the Secretariat should also look at the question of how to retain staff members in service, in view of the high cost to the United Nations of the recruitment process.

(Mr. Dinu, Romania)

21. Romania continued to be underrepresented in the Secretariat. As of 30 June 1991, it had three staff members in the Secretariat, compared with a desirable range of from 5 to 15. Although three Romanian candidates had been selected through the competitive examination which had been held in Bucharest for junior posts in the Secretariat, not all of those young people had yet been offered appointments. His delegation would be grateful to the Secretariat for an explanation of the measures being taken to recruit them. Romania was prepared to put forward candidates with specialized expertise in various fields chosen through the strict application of the rules and practices for advertising vacancies and selecting candidates. It was difficult to understand why, once a candidate had been selected and approved by the Board, he or she should not be offered the post advertised without delay, and it was even more difficult to understand why there should be internal redeployment of advertised posts between departments. Romania reaffirmed its support for the system of competitive examinations and for the idea of extending the system to cover posts at the P-3 level. The Secretariat should bear in mind, however, that the examinations would serve no purpose if successful candidates were not offered employment as expeditiously as possible.

22. With regard to the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/46/377), his delegation hoped that the Secretariat would intensify its efforts to achieve the targets of 30 per cent of Professional-level posts before the end of the year and 35 per cent by the end of 1995. However, the objective of securing enhanced representation of women at all levels should be pursued in conjunction with efforts to achieve more equitable geographical distribution. It went without saying that both objectives were fully compatible with the need to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity mentioned in the Charter. A number of tables and graphs contained in the report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/46/370) had been reproduced in the report on the improvement of the status of women (A/46/377), in order, so it was understood, to facilitate discussion of the issue by both the Fifth Committee and the Third Committee. His delegation hoped that consideration of the item by both Committees would not result in a duplication of work or the formulation of conflicting directives. It was his delegation's belief that the main forum for consideration of personnel and other administrative questions should be the Fifth Committee.

23. Romania attached the greatest importance to the proper representation of all Member States in the Secretariat and believed that whatever methodology was used for distributing posts among Member States must be fair, realistic and flexible. In that respect, Romania shared the view of the Secretary-General that the present system of desirable ranges should take into account the main criteria necessary to ensure an equitable distribution of posts among Member States: membership, population and contribution (A/C.5/46/2, para. 34). It was important, however, to consider carefully the relative weight to be assigned to the various factors, and a spirit of compromise must prevail on the issue. He wondered what consequences the recent admission of seven new Member States would have for the desirable

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ranges and what would be the effect of the introduction of a new scale of assessments. It would be helpful if the Secretariat could submit a revised version of the alternative options for desirable ranges taking those factors into consideration.

24. His delegation believed that the recruitment of officials on secondment from government service was a useful arrangement of great benefit to the United Nations, Member States and the staff members themselves. The United Nations benefited from the contribution of trained staff representing all the regions and cultures of the world; Governments benefited from the return of staff who had acquired a unique international outlook; and many staff members wished eventually to return to their home countries to resume their positions there. Now that most restrictions on the long-term employment of nationals of all countries in the Secretariat had been removed, caution was needed in order to ensure that secondment did not disappear as a useful option. Member States had an opportunity to work together to secure a fair tripartite agreement on the subject.

25. His delegation was fully convinced of the importance of a just and efficient internal justice system in the Secretariat. The report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/46/7) detailed an impressive variety of mechanisms for responding to every conceivable staff problem, but it did not explain why so many complaints should be made by staff members against management decisions. Many of those complaints might be avoided if the whole process of managerial decision-making were more transparent.

26. His delegation noted with considerable interest the report on respect for the privileges and immunities of officials (A/C.5/46/4) and reaffirmed its strong commitment to respect those privileges and immunities, as well as its commitment to work closely with the Secretariat on such matters.

27. The document containing the views of the staff representatives of the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/46/21) dealt with matters relating to the day-to-day management of the Secretariat, and, in his opinion, the Committee should not go into detail on such questions. He was nevertheless concerned that the staff representatives saw the current situation with respect to career development, training, the promotion policy and the internal administration of justice in such a bleak light. His delegation thought that a highly motivated staff was essential if the Organization was to be able to meet effectively the requirements of a rapidly changing world. It therefore urged the Secretariat to give priority to a review of the causes of low staff morale and to propose solutions.

28. In recent years, the General Assembly had adopted a number of resolutions and decisions containing important directives for the Secretariat with respect to recruitment and career development. He wondered whether anything had been done to implement them or if they had been replaced by other directives. His delegation wished to request the Secretariat to submit a comprehensive report

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(Mr. Dinu, Romania)

to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session on the Organization's personnel policies, with special emphasis on policies deriving from General Assembly resolutions. The report should examine the development and implementation of recruitment plans aimed at bringing the representation of unrepresented or underrepresented countries within their desirable range and at increasing the proportion of women in the Secretariat. It should also cover the establishment of an appropriate career development system that would offer all Secretariat staff, both Professional and General Service, equal promotion opportunities and reasonable career expectations.

29. Mr. ELIASHIV (Israel) expressed appreciation for the concern shown for the well-being of employees of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) who were currently detained. It was his understanding that Mr. Abed Rabbu Hussein Abu Aun, whose name appeared on the list in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/46/4), had been released on 20 November 1990. The other people on the list had been duly detained, pursuant to the law in force in the administered areas, because of their involvement in illegal activities. The mere fact of being a United Nations staff member was not enough to provide immunity from the law in force, especially when the illegal activities involved the disruption of public order, violence and terrorism. Article 100, paragraph 1, of the Charter, required that United Nations staff members should refrain from any action that might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization. Accordingly, incitement to violence, planning and carrying out acts of violence, and other threats to public order and safety prejudiced a person's status as a United Nations staff member and caused considerable harm to the Organization itself. The Israeli authorities were doing everything possible to caution local UNRWA staff to refrain from participating in activities involving violations of law and public order. In several cases, the authorities had requested UNRWA to reconsider its practice of employing staff who had been involved, sometimes repeatedly, in such activities, but to no avail. It was the practice of the Israeli authorities to inform the heads of UNRWA offices in the administered areas, upon their request, as to the circumstances of the detention of UNRWA staff members, as well as the details of trials and judgements. As a general rule, trials in the military courts in those areas were open to the public, so there was nothing to prevent representatives of the United Nations attending. Persons detained by the Israeli authorities were granted all requisite facilities during their detention, including constant medical supervision and treatment, as necessary, the right to be visited by their families and attorneys, and other privileges, such as the right to appeal their detention to an Appeals Board and to have their case reviewed by the Supreme Court of Israel sitting as a High Court of Justice. In conclusion, his delegation wished to emphasize that, when Israel decided to detain a person, it did so after taking all due precautions and only after ascertaining that detention was necessary. The individuals on the list had been detained because of their involvement in hostile activities, with a view to preventing their involvement in future hostile activities and protecting the safety and security of the population. Their detention had no connection whatsoever with their professional activities, but only with actions incompatible with their functions as officials of the United Nations.

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(Mr. Eliashiv, Israel)

30. Turning to the question of taxation referred to in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/46/4/Add.1), he wished to point out that the ad valorem wharfage charge levied by the Israeli Port Authority at the port of Haifa was not a tax. Furthermore, it was levied by an independent authority, not by the Government of Israel. It was a charge for services rendered only, and was paid by all tax-exempt organizations without protest, including diplomats and foreign missions. The fact that it was levied ad valorem merely reflected the Port Authority's chosen accounting method and should not compel the conclusion that it constituted a tax. The agencies concerned could contact the appropriate authorities in Israel for further information.

31. Mr. WILENSKI (Australia), speaking on behalf of Canada, New Zealand and Australia, said that bringing about a greater degree of gender equality in the United Nations was a fundamental issue with respect to human rights, social justice and the implementation of the principles of the Charter. It was necessary for women to be represented at senior policy-making levels if the problems of half of the human race were to be taken fully into account. The equitable promotion of women on the basis of merit would improve the efficiency of the Organization. Not only would such a policy ensure that highly talented staff could attain positions commensurate with their abilities; it would also close those positions to less able persons who might demoralize their subordinates. Most of those present had seen half of their competitors removed from the race by biased rules and discriminatory attitudes, either conscious or unconscious. Considering that, of the 166 Permanent Representatives, 163 were men and that, of the Secretariat's 45 senior staff, 43 were men, one might well wonder how many would have made it if the women against whom they had been competing for advancement had been given an equal chance.

32. He acknowledged that there had been some progress towards equality, particularly at junior levels, but the pace remained slow. In 1985, the proportion of women at the D-1 level and above had been 7.13 per cent. Six years later, the percentage had grown by less than 1.5 per cent, to 8.6 per cent. It was paradoxical that the United Nations was following rather than leading the movement in the world towards equality. In his annual report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General stated that, as a concern, gender equality was second to none (A/46/1, part X), and indeed, in the Office of the Secretary-General, 44.4 per cent of the senior staff were women. However, the Secretary-General's concern was apparently not shared by the majority of managers in the Secretariat. The lack of progress over the past 12 months suggested that senior officials were not fully committed to the advancement of women. Such commitment needed to be demonstrated by clearly visible action.

33. The new measure approved by the Secretary-General on 18 March 1991 (A/46/377, para. 5) was welcome, although it would not have been necessary if a full-scale equal employment opportunity programme had been instituted. While it was still too early to gauge its effect, it was important for senior management to monitor the situation in coming months in order to ensure that the desired results were achieved.

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(Mr. Wilenski, Australia)

34. The most encouraging development in 1991 had been the appointment of an outstandingly able woman, Mrs. Ogata, to the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. However, the data contained in the report on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/46/377) was not encouraging. One of the most obvious indicators was the overall percentage of women in posts subject to geographical distribution, which, from 30 June 1990 to 30 June 1991, had risen by less than 1 per cent. If that level of progress was maintained in 1991-1992, the target of 30 per cent by 1990 would be achieved at best two years behind schedule. Unless something was done to break the pattern of the past five years, the Organization would not reach the 35 per cent target set by the General Assembly for 1995. It was at the more senior levels that the failure to advance the status of women in the Secretariat became glaringly obvious. Despite the target set by the General Assembly in resolution 45/239 C of a 25 per cent participation rate for women in posts at the D-1 level and above, in 1991 they represented a scant 8.6 per cent. There were still only two women Under-Secretaries-General and not one woman at the level of Assistant Secretary-General.

35. Of all the appointments made during the period 1990-1991, neither of the two Under-Secretaries-General appointed was a woman; the one Assistant Secretary-General appointed was not a woman; of the six appointments to the D-2 level, only one was a woman; and, even at the D-1 level, of the nine appointed only three were women. Equally striking, out of 26 persons promoted from the P-5 to the D-1 level during the same period, only three were women. He wondered whether anyone was monitoring the appointments and bringing them to the attention of the Secretary-General, as they flew in the face of a whole series of resolutions calling specifically for more women in senior and decision-making positions.

36. The distribution of women in different areas of the Secretariat was also cause for concern. Certain areas, such as the translation and interpretation services, were becoming "women's areas" and women were still being kept out of decision-making posts. While only about 8 per cent of senior posts were in conference services and human resources management, over one third of the senior women worked in those areas. On the other hand, of the 48 senior posts in UNCTAD and the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, none were held by women.

37. Other practical steps could be taken to translate the principle of equal opportunity into reality. Such steps might include, for instance, a comprehensive evaluation and analysis to determine the barriers that existed to the equal participation of women and to find solutions to overcome those barriers; the establishment of an action programme aimed at effecting the requisite structural and attitudinal change; the creation of management mechanisms to make all supervisors accountable for their performance in promoting gender equality; the establishment of an equal employment opportunity unit outside the Office of Human Resources Management capable of exerting real authority over personnel procedures and actions throughout the

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(Mr. Wilenski, Australia)

Organization; and a greater effort by Member States to identify and nominate qualified women candidates for Secretariat positions. The situation with regard to Eastern Europe was particularly serious, but his delegation was pleased to note an improvement in the representation of African women.

38. A further issue to which everyone had been sensitized was that of sexual harassment, a subject that had not had much public discussion as far as the United Nations was concerned. The rudimentary guidelines on sexual harassment which applied to the Secretariat should be refined, strengthened and widely promulgated so that women and men knew their rights. The national bureaucracies of Australia, Canada and New Zealand had their own guidelines, which could serve as a model, although the personnel practices of the United Nations should always be in advance of those of its Member States.

39. Mr. PANDAY (Nepal) said that for more than a year the United Nations had been at the focus of international attention in a manner unparalleled in its history. The restoration of faith in the capacity of the Organization had placed new demands on it, which could only be met with the proper staff. In the context of the ongoing consultations on the revitalization of the United Nations, his delegation hoped that due attention would be paid to an equitable system of career development with a realistic system of incentives. Secretariat staff needed to have the assurance that personnel mechanisms were transparent and were functioning in accordance with the relevant Staff Rules and Regulations. They also needed to have faith in the mechanisms for redressing their grievances. It might be pertinent in that regard to take a hard look at the role of the Committee on Applications for Review of Administrative Tribunal Judgements.

40. Respect for the status of international civil servants was essential if the Secretariat was to enjoy the confidence of Member States. The detention of staff members in defiance of the rules governing the privileges and immunities of the international civil service was deplorable, as were the restrictions on travel for staff members of certain nationalities. Staff members, in turn, must conduct themselves in a manner befitting the Organization they served, and their loyalties should be exclusively to the United Nations.

41. There was a need for improved management of the Secretariat at all levels. Efficient management would involve greater mobility of staff; that must, however, be tied to career development opportunities. In that context, he wished to refer to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/46/326).

42. Good management must also be accompanied by improved prospects for women in the Secretariat. It was discouraging to note the meagre representation of women at the decision-making levels. The problem was not one of promotion only, but also of recruitment. There had to be a pool of eligible women candidates for promotion to higher levels. His delegation stressed the need to give special attention to qualified women candidates from developing

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(Mr. Panday, Nepal)

countries and hoped that management was fully aware of the concerns of Member States and would spare no effort to attain the targets set in General Assembly resolution 45/239 C.

43. His delegation reiterated its call for an effort to redress the imbalance between underrepresented and overrepresented States in the Secretariat. There had been some improvement in the representation of staff from developing countries at the D-1 level, but representation from overrepresented States also seemed to have increased. His delegation would be grateful to learn why, during the previous two years, staff from developing countries had not been promoted to posts subject to geographical distribution at the Assistant Secretary-General level and above.

44. Having studied the report of the Secretary-General on alternative options for desirable ranges for the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional category and above (A/C.5/46/2), his delegation felt that options F and J were compatible and that option J was the most desirable.

45. In conclusion, his delegation wished to emphasize the need to maintain a constructive relationship between the staff, through their elected representatives, and management. A climate of confidence was essential if staff members were to give their best for the attainment of the goals of a revitalized United Nations.

46. Mr. RAZVIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, although his delegation was basically satisfied with the volume and substance of the documents available to it, it regretted that the reports on a review of the rules, regulations and criteria for the promotion of staff within the framework of the vacancy management system, and on staff-management relations, had not been made available. Without doubt, the United Nations was entering a phase of drastic renewal dictated by the realities of the new post-confrontational world order and the need to reform and adapt the existing mechanisms of international cooperation to the new challenges and requirements facing the world community. Thus there was an urgent need to renew or revise the policy and practice of human resources management. That policy should stem from the principle, enshrined in the United Nations Charter and elaborated in General Assembly resolution 45/239, that decisions regarding the appointment, promotion, granting or reviewing of permanent contracts and career development of the staff should be based on the necessity of securing "the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity". The "highest standards" criterion had been somewhat eroded over time and was commonly replaced by the notions of merely "high", "competent", "good" or "satisfactory" performance. That adversely affected the morale of those staff members who did meet "the highest standards" and deserved a successful career in the Organization. To make matters worse, it created an unwarranted opportunity for virtually anyone who was unhappy with the personnel decisions of the management to appeal against them.

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(Mr. Razvin, USSR)

47. In that context, the Secretariat should, pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 45/239, review the internal normative documents on personnel matters and submit relevant amendments to the Staff Rules and Regulations. A similar criterion, based on the Charter, should be used as a basis for the career development scheme to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

48. His delegation welcomed the intention to place the secondment of staff from national civil services on a legal footing. The procedure set forth by the Secretary-General in his report (A/C.5/46/9) was simple, effective and, given the circumstances, probably the only feasible legal framework for secondment. In endorsing the proposed procedure, he hoped that the question would finally be depoliticized and resolved in accordance with the legitimate interests of the Organization, the Governments and the individuals concerned, as provided in section II, paragraph 3, of resolution 45/239.

49. With regard to the conclusion contained in paragraph 8 of document A/C.5/46/9 that resolution 37/126 was applicable to all staff, including those on secondment, he stressed that the resolution in question provided above all for the right of a staff member to have his performance taken into account and not the right to a career appointment. In that respect, it was necessary to clarify the scope of the resolution and to make it clear that a career appointment could be granted after five years of service provided that the candidate had genuinely displayed "the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity"; merely to have achieved a good performance was not enough. Section IV, paragraph 5, of resolution 37/126 must be understood in the context of the preceding paragraph 4, which stated that organizations should establish their needs for permanent and fixed-term staff on a continuing basis. Although the Group of 18 had discussed the possibility of achieving a reasonable balance between various types of appointments as a way of improving efficiency, the Secretariat had apparently not pursued the issue and there were no criteria nor even a tentative policy on the matter. It would be worthwhile to consider establishing an appropriate ratio between permanent and fixed-term contracts for different occupational groups, particularly where there were prospects for introducing new technologies and increasing productivity, as well as for departments and units with a mandate of limited duration. A higher proportion of fixed-term contracts would facilitate the redeployment of human resources, partially resolve the problem of staff training and enhance the Secretariat's capacity to ensure mobility, rotation and inflow of fresh talent at all levels.

50. In connection with the need for greater efficiency in the Secretariat, reference should be made to rule 104.13 of the Staff Rules concerning the review of career appointments at the end of the first five years of service. The rule seemed to have been completely ignored; therefore, either it should be dropped or steps should be taken to start implementing it, primarily through a new performance evaluation system. The proposals which laid greater emphasis on healthy competition in personnel matters would clearly benefit

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those staff members considered to be the Organization's greatest asset, in other words those whose performance year after year met the highest standards. The Secretariat's personnel policy should include provisions to reward such staff.

51. Attempts to exclude from consideration for vacancies candidates not belonging to a department, a division or the Secretariat as a whole, appeared to be counter-productive in terms of ensuring the highest standards of staff competence. His delegation felt that such an approach ran counter to the principle of equal opportunity and hindered the inflow of fresh talent to posts at all levels. In that context, he emphasized once again the need for strict compliance with the provisions on equal opportunity contained in resolution 45/239. The national competitive examinations for posts at the P-2 and P-3 levels encouraged competition and promoted the unbiased selection of new staff. He hoped to see more extensive use made of that recruitment practice, which was particularly promising from the standpoint of better geographical representation and better representation of women.

52. In that connection, it should be emphasized that in 1990 the General Assembly had set new targets for the representation of women with two specific conditions for their attainment: women should be given priority, all things being equal and to the extent possible. Any other approach would go beyond that mandate and would have grave repercussions for the overall personnel situation in the Secretariat.

53. Turning to other matters, he stressed that it was unacceptable to delay any further the implementation of recommendation 59 of the Group of 18 on the establishment of clear guidelines for the activities and financing of the Staff Union.

54. Mr. ABDULRHAMA (Sudan) said that his country had always fully respected international agreements and conventions, including the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. Referring to document A/C.5/46/4/Add.1, he noted that it might be the first time since its independence that his country had been accused of violating an international convention. There were reasons for believing that the document in question had not been issued with the total good faith to be expected of a decision adopted on behalf of the United Nations. His delegation felt that the members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination had been pressured into issuing the document hastily before they had received a response from his Government.

55. The contents of the document lacked merit for the following reasons. First, the arguments put forward therein were based on an alleged violation by his Government of the provisions of section 18 (b), article V, of the Convention. The 1981 legislation referred to in the document had now been repealed and replaced by a law regulating the affairs of Sudanese nationals working abroad, which contained no provisions governing Sudanese nationals

(Mr. Abdulrhama, Sudan)

working with the United Nations, the specialized agencies or other related organizations. Consequently, the fact that the document in question based its argument on a law which had been repealed meant that it was entirely without merit.

56. Less than three months had elapsed since the Office of Legal Affairs had sent his country the note dated 11 July 1991 referred to in the document. That was a short period for a Government to respond to a question of that kind, which concerned various authorities within the State. With regard to the note verbale of 8 March 1982, his Government saw no reason to reply to a note sent more than nine years previously, particularly as the reasons cited in the note were no longer valid.

57. The note dated 11 July 1991 classified the national contribution paid by Sudanese nationals working abroad as an income tax. That conclusion was wrong since the contribution was paid as a result of an offer made voluntarily by the Conference of Sudanese nationals working abroad, held at Khartoum in September 1989, with a view to providing the country's economy with foreign currency. It was a fixed sum determined with reference to different occupational categories and was not levied on salaries and emoluments received. The amount paid by Sudanese nationals working for international organizations was between \$200 and \$300 per annum. Income tax was set at a given percentage of employees' salaries and would be much higher than the figure quoted. Consequently, section 18 (b), article V, of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations did not apply to the contribution.

58. The Office of Legal Affairs and the Administrative Committee on Coordination seemed to have responded to the promptings of an individual staff member or a limited number of Sudanese staff members who wished to exempt themselves from the honour of contributing the small sum of money involved when renewing their passports. His delegation trusted that most Sudanese staff members at the United Nations were willing to continue paying the voluntary national contribution. Those who did not agree could say so and the Government could consider their position.

59. His Government would respond in due course to the note from the Office of Legal Affairs. In the meantime, he requested that document A/C.5/46/4/Add.1 should be removed from consideration under agenda item 115 (b) and a corrigendum issued, since the matter had been raised prematurely.

60. Mr. MOSALA (Lesotho) expressed his support for the recruitment policies and requested the Secretariat to transmit information concerning vacancies in good time to the Missions of all Member States to ensure the equity, integrity and efficiency of the process and to make it easier for the information to be passed on promptly to their respective capitals. He also expressed his support for increased representation of women in the higher echelons of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SIXTH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
25th meeting
held on
Thursday, 7 November 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 25th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993
(continued) (A/46/6/Rev.1, A/46/7)

AGENDA ITEM 108: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/46/16 and Add.1)

First reading (continued)

Section 22. International drug control

1. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that the 4.9 per cent growth rate was entirely due to the conversion of four non-recurrent posts, a category that had been eliminated in the proposed programme budget, to established posts. He recalled that, in late 1990, 20 new posts had been authorized under section 22.

2. He further recalled that, in its resolution 45/179, the General Assembly had asked the Secretary-General to create an integrated United Nations International Drug Control Programme and to submit a report on measures taken in that regard to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session. Two reports had been prepared by the Secretariat: one, the main report on the implementation of the resolution (A/46/480), was currently under consideration by the Third Committee; the other, on administrative and financial arrangements for the Programme (A/C.5/46/23), was being reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). He hoped that the Fifth Committee could proceed with its first reading of section 22 without waiting for the Third Committee and the Advisory Committee to complete their work on the topic.

3. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that ACABQ recommended approval of the Secretary-General's request for the conversion of four temporary posts to established posts. As stated in paragraph 22.6 of its report (A/46/7), it believed that, in view of the large increase in staffing resources under section 22, it should be possible to scale down the request for \$539,700 to pay for consultants. It trusted that the use of new technologies would enhance the Programme's productivity. He would introduce the report of ACABQ on administrative and financial arrangements for the Programme in the context of the Committee's consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial arrangements for the Programme (A/C.5/46/23).

4. Ms. BERENGUER (Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Coordination) said that CPC had approved the programme narrative of section 22 with one change: the addition under subprogramme 6 of a fourth priority area concerning ways and means of increasing access to opiates for legitimate medical purposes.

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5. Miss MONTAÑO (Bolivia) said that her delegation was pleased to note the priority given by the Secretariat to international drug control, as evidenced by the proposed real growth rate of 4.9 per cent for that section. It wished to stress the urgency of intensifying efforts to improve the system for monitoring and controlling narcotic drugs, implementing the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control in accordance with resolution 45/179. It was important to ensure that the Programme had sufficient resources to fulfil its mandate. To that end, the Programme's budget should be constantly monitored until it could be determined that the resources allocated were sufficient to allow it to carry out all its programmed activities. In that respect, her country attached particular importance to projects aimed at substituting the cultivation of other lucrative crops for that of narcotic plants and financing other activities that would allow developing countries to generate equivalent revenue.

6. While regular budget resources had been distributed evenly among the eight subprogrammes in section 22, the distribution of extrabudgetary resources created an imbalance in the levels of financial support. In that light, her delegation wished to stress the need to broaden the resource base for substantive activities and operational programmes. Moreover, the format of the proposed programme budget should be improved to make it easier to assess the real growth of budgetary resources, extrabudgetary resources and the combined total of both. Finally, in order to correct the distortions in programme implementation created by the current distribution of extrabudgetary resources, ways should be found to achieve greater flexibility in allocating extrabudgetary funds.

7. Her delegation reserved the right to comment on the report of the Secretary-General on administrative and financial arrangements (A/C.5/46/23) when it was discussed in the Committee.

8. Mr. COHEN (United States of America) wished to express his appreciation to the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme for their efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Organization's drug control activities during the course of 1991. Expenditures under section 22 represented less than 0.6 per cent of the total budget requested for the biennium. Given the importance of the Programme, he did not consider the proposed 4.9 per cent real growth rate excessive.

9. As further measures to enhance the Programme's capacity were currently under review, his delegation would comment on those proposals at the appropriate time. For the present, it wished only to express its belief that the Programme should be given additional regular budget posts through the redeployment of staff currently assigned to other programmes and departments in the Secretariat.

10. Mr. CLAVIJO (Colombia) said that, like Bolivia, his country attached considerable importance to the distribution of funds in such a way as to ensure compliance with the overall orientation of the Programme. That concern was adequately reflected in the report of CPC (A/46/16). However, he wished to add that, since the Programme was dependent on extrabudgetary funding for 80 per cent of its resources, donor countries should be required to make general contributions that were not tied to any specific activities.

11. Mr. ZARI-ZARRE (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his country, as a country in a transit region for East-West drug trafficking, attached great importance to international drug control and had intensified its costly campaign against drug trafficking. The Secretary-General had received a strong mandate in General Assembly resolutions 45/146, 45/147 and 45/148 to reinforce the drug control activities of the Organization. While the Secretariat had made international drug control one of the main priorities in its budget proposals and had provided for considerable growth, he was concerned about the heavy reliance on extrabudgetary resources.

12. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that, as the Third Committee had not yet finished its deliberations on the proposals regarding the structure of the Programme, and as the Twelve wished to study the Advisory Committee's report on administrative and financial arrangements, they would like to revert to section 22 at a later stage.

13. Mr. RAE (India) said that, as a victim of transit trafficking, his country attached high priority to section 22, which was in fact one of the five broad priority areas identified by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session. He was happy to note that, in keeping with that emphasis, considerable growth was proposed for the international drug control programme and its extrabudgetary funding was projected to increase by almost 30 per cent. Given the very considerable resources expected from voluntary contributions, he did not understand the reason for increasing the number of posts funded from the regular budget and decreasing those funded from extrabudgetary resources, as indicated in the proposed programme budget. In addition, he could not accept the justification given for the proposed conversion of four non-recurrent posts to established posts. If those posts had originally been funded on a non-recurrent basis to assist the secretariat in honouring its treaty obligations and in carrying out follow-up activities to the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, as indicated in paragraph 22.18 of the proposed programme budget, he assumed that the activities in question had been temporary. If there were new activities that would justify funding the posts on a permanent basis, they should be identified in the proposal.

14. As the largest producer of opiates for legitimate medical purposes, India attached great importance to increasing access to them for such use, as mandated by General Assembly resolution S-17/2 and Economic and Social Council resolution E/1990/31. He would like precise indications from the Secretariat as to the financial and personnel resources allocated to those activities

(Mr. Rae, India)

within the United Nations system. His delegation also reserved the right to address the issues dealt with in document A/C.5/46/23 at a later date.

15. Mr. GREGG (Australia) said that his country attached high priority to international drug control and, in broad terms, agreed with the staffing and resource levels proposed. However, like the States members of the European Community, it believed that a final decision on section 22 should be deferred until a number of issues, such as those dealt with in document A/C.5/46/23, could be addressed.

16. Ms. ERKISSON FOGH (Sweden) said that her delegation, too, wished to revert to section 22 at a later date.

17. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that some of the issues dealt with under section 22 exceeded the competence of the Third Committee. It might therefore be a good idea to look at better ways of approaching the topic of international drug control rather than wait for the Third Committee to finish its deliberations. If the Fifth Committee did decide to wait, it might very well run out of time. He pointed out that any decision taken at the current meeting could be revised in the light of further consultations.

18. Turning to budgetary matters, he said that, at its forty-fifth session, the General Assembly had approved the net addition of 20 new international drug control posts in the revised estimates for the biennium 1990-1991. Now the proposed budget for the biennium 1992-1993 called for a real growth rate of 4.9 per cent under the section. With the consolidation of the various supposedly separate drug entities, his delegation had expected greater efficiency and economy. Although he was aware that international drug control was one of the five priority sectors, at some point it would be necessary to decide when the Programme was large enough.

19. There was considerable difference of opinion among delegations concerning reliance on extrabudgetary resources. In resolving that issue, the Committee should be guided by established practice and the provisions of Article 17 of the Charter, which stated that the expenses of the Organization should be borne by the Members as apportioned by the General Assembly. He agreed with the representative of Colombia with regard to extrabudgetary resources; if excessive reliance on such resources were to continue out of necessity, it would be essential to develop ideas for increasing general-purpose contributions.

20. Ms. BEAULIEU (Canada) said that her delegation supported the restructuring process but would reserve its comments on the subject until more details were available.

21. Mr. PANOV (Bulgaria) said that, in view of the great importance of the subject, the Committee should postpone taking a decision until the results of the Third Committee's deliberations were available.

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22. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that it would be dangerous for the Committee to defer taking decisions simply because other Committees were considering action. He did not see how its work could progress if that procedure were adopted. His delegation supported the generous proposed real growth of 4.9 per cent under section 22. It also agreed on the need for a balance of regular budget and extrabudgetary resources.

23. Finally, he wished to know how the Committee was to handle the proposals in the report of the Secretary-General on administrative and financial arrangements regarding the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (A/C.5/46/23) and when it would be able to discuss the Advisory Committee's conclusions and recommendations thereon. His delegation supported the activities under the Programme but shared the concern expressed by the representative of India about the proposed conversion of temporary posts into established posts. It would not, however, oppose the proposals.

24. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) said that his delegation endorsed the programme narrative and estimates for section 22 and supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations. It would have been prepared to endorse a rate of real growth greater than 4.9 per cent and the provision of a larger than 30 per cent increase in extrabudgetary resources.

25. On procedural matters, his delegation was prepared to discuss the report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/46/23, but not to await the Advisory Committee's comments on it before taking action on section 22. Under the current budget process, estimates were approved without taking account of the programme budget implications of decisions adopted at the current session. The Committee should therefore reach a provisional decision on section 22 and take account of any financial implications during informal consultations.

26. Mr. GREGG (Australia) said that he had not intended, in his earlier statement, to suggest deferring a decision on section 22, as had been done in the case of sections 2 and 6. However, if the comments awaited from the Advisory Committee were of direct relevance to the Committee's decision, they should not be treated informally.

27. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had begun its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on administrative and financial arrangements (A/C.5/46/23) only the previous day. He could not yet say when it would reach conclusions, or what those conclusions would be, after it had considered that report and the related report of the Secretary-General on measures taken to implement resolution 45/179 (A/46/480). The Advisory Committee would be continuing its consideration of both reports and of any conclusions reached by the Third Committee, and he would keep the Fifth Committee informed of developments. The Advisory Committee's report on its consideration of document A/C.5/46/23 would have to be a formal written report because it concerned administrative and financial arrangements pursuant to the

(Mr. Mselle)

financial and personnel regulations of the United Nations. The Fifth Committee could not therefore deal with it in informal consultations.

28. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), replying to the issues raised, said that the proposal to convert non-recurrent temporary posts into established posts was an attempt to introduce greater transparency into the budget proposals by suppressing a concept the main advantages of which were that the posts did not appear in staffing tables and were not included in the growth rate calculations. As far as section 22 was concerned, the concept no longer existed and the proposals indicated that the posts created on that basis were in fact necessary for the Programme. He would try to present more evidence to that effect during the informal consultations. The proposed conversion had no financial implications because the posts in question had been costed in the current programme budget, even though they did not appear in the staffing table. There would thus be no additional charge on the regular budget.

29. In reply to points made by the representative of India, he said that the apparent decline in the number of extrabudgetary posts indicated by table 22.4 did not reflect the true picture because, as the footnote to that table stated, it excluded many posts financed under an arrangement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The actual situation with respect to extrabudgetary posts under the Programme was still not clear. With regard to the question about the provision of financial resources and posts in connection with the licit production of drugs, he would provide an answer at a later date. In conclusion, he assured the Committee that the Secretariat had taken note of all the points raised in the discussion.

30. The CHAIRMAN requested the Committee, in a spirit of flexibility, to take the usual action on section 22, to continue discussions in informal consultations, and to hold informal and formal meetings as necessary to discuss the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/C.5/46/23 and the Advisory Committee's comments thereon.

31. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that the comments by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee implied that a formal meeting would be necessary. If the course suggested by the Chairman included such a meeting, his delegation would not oppose it.

32. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that she had deferred making her delegation's comments on section 22 until it had a complete picture of the situation, including the Advisory Committee's comments on document A/C.5/46/23. She therefore supported the Chairman's suggested course of action and reserved her delegation's right to comment on the proposals under section 22 at a later date.

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33. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that no irreparable harm would be done if the Committee agreed to the Chairman's suggestion, because the report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/46/23 made no proposals requiring additional staff or funds. It might be that the Third Committee, when it concluded its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General in document A/46/480, would make recommendations which did require additional posts and funds. If so, they would be considered in the usual way as proposals related to a decision of the Third Committee in the context of a statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General. If, therefore, the Fifth Committee took a provisional decision on section 22, the discussion would be resumed at a formal meeting of the Committee in the context of the Advisory Committee's report on document A/C.5/46/23 and any recommendations made by the Third Committee.

34. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that he was satisfied with the comments made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and hoped that he was right in stating that the proposals in document A/C.5/46/23 would not require additional resources. However, the proposed conversion of the post of Executive Director of the Programme from a temporary to an established post related to the broader question of the comprehensive restructuring of the United Nations entities in Vienna and to the General Assembly's request to the Secretary-General to identify four high-level posts for abolition. The Fifth Committee had to consider not only the International Drug Control Programme, but also the broader issue of the restructuring of the Vienna services, and he believed that they should be tackled together.

35. Mr. RAE (India) endorsed the Chairman's suggestion as to how the Committee should proceed. He would pursue the questions that he had asked earlier about the provision of adequate resources for the licit production of drugs and about the conversion of posts during the informal consultations.

36. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) said that, in his view, the Committee should confine its attention to section 22. The report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/46/23 was not part of the proposed programme budget and its implications should be considered in a different context.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the conclusions and recommendations of CPC on section 22, as contained in paragraphs 301 and 302 of its report (A/46/16).

38. It was so decided.

39. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$13,632,300 under section 22 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 was approved in first reading, on the understanding that the issues raised in connection with section 22 would be considered in informal consultations and any necessary adjustments made.

40. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda), explaining his delegation's position, said that it was his understanding that the decision which had just been taken did not embrace the proposals submitted in document A/C.5/46/23, to which he would revert during informal consultations.

Section 23. Economic Commission for Africa

41. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that the proportion of funding for the Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS) that was to be met by UNDP was guaranteed for the biennium 1992-1993. With regard to the non-recurrent provision of \$850,000 for four posts at the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) (A/46/6/Rev.1, para. 23.16), UNDP was providing funding for projects rather than making a contribution to the general funding of the Institute. With respect to the provision for the training of language staff at ECA (para. 23.99), the relevant report of the Secretary-General would shortly be submitted to the Advisory Committee for its consideration, as would the report on the question of a temporary post at ECA for evaluation. Lastly, with regard to the African Regional Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, should the Third Committee adopt a resolution with programme budget implications, the matter would, of course, come before the Fifth Committee.

42. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the general reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee had not been applied to the regional commissions, with the exception of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). The Advisory Committee had been mindful of the large balances remaining under those sections, which were largely attributable to the vacancy situation at the regional commissions. In response to concerns expressed by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee, the Secretariat had taken action to reduce the vacancy rates. Although rates at some commissions still exceeded 5 per cent, the rate applied in the preparation of staff costs for the regular budget, further action to reduce them was already in hand. With regard to the reduction in the appropriations proposed in respect of ECE, the Fifth Committee would note that ECE made use of various services provided by the United Nations Office at Geneva, for example, conference servicing and administrative and general services.

43. In its report on the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Advisory Committee noted that the ECA staffing table should indicate the number of extrabudgetary posts funded by other United Nations agencies (A/46/7, para. 23.6). With regard to the multinational programming and operational centres (MULPOCs), the various review bodies had concluded that they should be further strengthened. The Advisory Committee was of the view that care should be taken to identify their programmes of work clearly in order to avoid any appearance of duplication with ECA headquarters. Specifically, the role of the secretariat of ECA and MULPOCs in programme formulation and implementation should be further clarified (A/46/7, para. 23.11).

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(Mr. Mselle)

44. The Advisory Committee concurred in the reclassification of the post of the Chief of the Transport Operation Section from P-4 to P-5, and accepted the proposal for the establishment of a P-4 post of editor and a P-3 post of system analyst at ECA. The Advisory Committee would shortly consider the question of the training programme for language staff.

45. Ms. BERENGUER (Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Coordination) noted that activities under section 23 fell within the five priorities identified by the General Assembly. Paragraphs 304 to 314 of the report of CPC should be read in conjunction with paragraphs 432 to 439, on the development issues and policies programme at ECA. In that section of its report, CPC had reiterated the continued validity of the MULPOCs and had noted that persistent inadequacies of financial and human resources had adversely affected their ability to discharge their functions, and had recommended that the General Assembly should fully reflect the recommendations of the Evaluation Report concerning the provision of resources. CPC had, in particular, indicated the need to strengthen the functioning of the MULPOCs (A/46/16, para. 310).

46. CPC had stressed the necessity of ensuring the predictability, adequacy and timeliness of extrabudgetary resources for ECA, and noted with regret the proposals to redeploy resources away from social sectors; appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that there was no adverse impact on programme delivery in that sector. For that reason, the Secretary-General should take measures to strengthen the evaluation function at ECA. She noted that the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1991/82, had appealed for the funding of additional posts in the MULPOCs and for the provision of adequate financial resources for ECA.

47. Mr. ELDEEB (Egypt) said that ECA was an important component of the United Nations system, having become the focal point for the concerns of Member States with regard to Africa. The relevance of those concerns had been reflected in the medium-term plan, in support of which the necessary funding for section 23 (ECA) must be provided under the regular budget since extrabudgetary resources could not be guaranteed. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed the Advisory Committee's recommendations in respect of section 23. The estimate of \$67,089,800 was the minimum needed for the implementation of ECA programmes and his delegation would make every effort to promote a consensus on the section within the Committee.

48. Mr. ONWUALIA (Nigeria) said that section 23 was extremely important. The modest rate of real growth of 2.7 per cent did not reflect the priority accorded to the development of Africa by the General Assembly. It was clear from table 23.1 in the proposed programme budget that the resource situation was not good; for example, the biggest contributor, UNDP, had reduced its contribution from \$19.2 million for the biennium 1990-1991 to \$17.9 million for the biennium 1992-1993. Many priority areas, including the environment and human settlements, had not been well provided for. The Commission's

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(Mr. Onwualia, Nigeria)

reliance on extrabudgetary resources was particularly disquieting. His delegation fully endorsed the CPC recommendation that the requisite resources should be provided to the MULPOCs. All posts at the MULPOCs should be filled. It was also important to provide funding for the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), and his delegation awaited with interest the report on the revival of a training programme for language staff at ECA.

49. The Commission's programmes must be improved. His delegation was surprised that the proposal for an evaluation section at ECA had apparently not been taken seriously, and would revert to the matter in the informal consultations to be held on section 23. Lastly, he appealed to the Secretary-General to release all funds approved for ECA under the regular budget before the appropriations lapsed at the end of the year.

50. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community, said that he wished to make a general statement concerning sections 23 to 27 of the proposed programme budget. The Twelve appreciated that much of the work done by the regional commissions was highly valued by Member States and wished to stress the need for increased coordination between the commissions and the relevant international organizations, in particular the specialized agencies of the United Nations, so as to avoid duplication of work. The activities and resources of the regional commissions were significant in relation to those of the substantive programmes of the central secretariat and it was therefore important that they should make an effective contribution to economic and social development, taking into account the recent evaluation in international relations.

51. The Twelve were aware that requirements varied from region to region and that the circumstances in which each of the commissions operated could be very different. They would consider carefully the remarks made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee with regard to the application of the general reductions recommended by ACABQ and believed that the issues involved merited further review in the course of informal consultations.

52. Mr. COHEN (United States of America) said that ECA should play an important role in the economic and social development of Africa. His delegation did not believe, however, that the programme structure and work programmes in the proposed programme budget would make significant contributions in that regard and did not agree with other delegations that a substantial increase in resources for ECA would improve the situation. Without major changes in the orientation of the work programme in section 23, as in other sections, increases in regular budget expenditures would have little, if any, impact. It would be recalled that the recommendations of the Group of 18, which had been approved by consensus in General Assembly resolution 41/213, included a number of proposals to improve United Nations economic and social programmes.

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(Mr. Cohen, United States)

53. Regarding the number of extrabudgetary posts available to the Commission, paragraph 23.6 of the Advisory Committee's report suggested that not all the extrabudgetary staff were reflected in the staffing table. His delegation would appreciate information on the total number of ECA posts financed from voluntary resources. The Advisory Committee likewise noted that not all of the posts provided to the MULPOCs had been reflected in the budget document. His delegation assumed from the information provided in paragraph 23.9 of the ACABQ report that the total staffing of the MULPOCs was 81 posts and not 53 posts as shown in table 23.11 of the Secretary-General's submission. It supported the Advisory Committee's position that future budget submissions should identify more clearly all resources available to the MULPOCs from both regular budget and extrabudgetary sources.

54. His delegation had serious reservations regarding the proposed subvention to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP). It did not believe that the Organization's regular budget should be used for such purposes and was particularly troubled by the reference in paragraph 23.8 of the ACABQ report to tripartite consultations on the future financing of IDEP. Information regarding the status of those consultations would be appreciated. His delegation trusted that any decision reached on the matter that could affect the regular budget would be subject to approval by the General Assembly. Member States should not be expected to finance the costs of IDEP through assessed contributions if they had not had an opportunity to participate in the discussions.

55. His delegation was also concerned by the decision of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to withdraw its support and staff from operational projects for industrial development. Given the priority which should be accorded to that issue, it hoped that UNIDO would reconsider its position.

56. Lastly, his delegation would appreciate clarification from the Secretariat concerning the impact of the revival of the training programme for translators/précis-writers, for which over \$700,000 had been allocated for the biennium 1992-1993, and on the budgetary requirements for temporary assistance to service meetings of ECA during the same biennium. At the forty-fifth session, several delegations had indicated that the training programme would provide ECA with permanent staff, thus obviating the need for the provision of temporary assistance from Geneva.

57. Mr. NKOUNKOU (Congo) expressed support for the conclusions and recommendations of CPC (A/46/16, paras. 310-314). His delegation, too, was concerned by the decision of UNIDO to withdraw its support and staff from operational projects for industrial development and would welcome clarification from the Secretariat as to the status of those projects which were expected to continue into the coming biennium.

58. Mr. NEGGA (Ethiopia) agreed with the comments made by the representatives of Egypt, Nigeria and the Congo and recalled the importance attached to regional cooperation for development in Africa in the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. In that context, the 2.7 per cent rate of real growth calculated for section 23 did not fully correspond to the requirements of ECA for the implementation of the programme of work outlined in the Secretary-General's submission.

59. With regard to the MULPOCs, his delegation endorsed the recommendation in paragraph 310 of the CPC report (A/46/16), which stressed the need to strengthen the functioning of the centres to enable them to carry out their mandate effectively. The requisite resources should be provided for that purpose. His delegation also noted the estimated requirements for staff training. In that connection, it supported the revival of a training programme for translators/précis-writers in all the official languages of ECA.

60. The modest rate of real growth projected could, in his delegation's view, have an adverse impact on some important subprogrammes, such as social development, the advancement of women, industrial development and natural resources. Those issues, like many others, needed greater attention than ever before in the context of the critical situation in Africa. The Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division might wish to explain the reasons for the proposed resource allocation in respect of those activities.

61. Mr. MONTHE (Cameroon) said that, in examining sections 23 to 27 of the proposed programme budget, the Fifth Committee would have to consider how far the Secretary-General's proposals would enable the regional commissions to serve as focal points for development. In doing so, it needed to bear in mind the circumstances in which they operated and the status of the resources available to them.

62. With regard specifically to section 23, the situation of ECA, in terms of both regular budget and extrabudgetary resources, appeared to be very precarious. How effectively the \$67 million regular budget provision could be used would depend largely on the ability of the Controller and the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division to overcome the cash flow problems of the past. By the end of the coming biennium, the Committee might well discover that only about \$40 million had actually been utilized. The \$39.5 million extrabudgetary resources included amounts from UNDP and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) that would both be reduced significantly from the 1990-1991 estimated expenditures, and, given the UNFPA trend towards independence, ECA might well find itself almost literally on shifting sands.

63. The rate of real growth was calculated at 2.7 per cent. To decide whether that was adequate, the Committee had to consider the programme implications. In that regard, the tables in paragraphs 23.5 and 23.6 of the budget document were of limited help in indicating the estimated percentage distribution of resources; they revealed a gap between regular budget and

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(Mr. Monthe, Cameroon)

extrabudgetary funding and confirmed the need for more resources to be devoted to the programme of work. CPC had repeatedly expressed the view that the programme structure of ECA had to be revised and he wondered how many of the 21 subprogrammes listed could really be implemented to good effect.

64. With regard to personnel questions, the decline in the vacancy rate was encouraging but the issue of enhancing staff morale still had to be addressed through incentives based on proper management and mobility. In the area of technological innovations, the automation project had been fully implemented and it was to be hoped that the 300 personal computers installed would increase productivity. Staffing for the MULPOCs was not complete, however, the Secretariat having provided less than the minimum number of posts required on the ground that redeployment was needed at ECA. With regard to the Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS), funding was insecure in view of the decision taken by UNDP. The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), furthermore, was being treated like a poor relation and the idea of a subvention and regular budget funding needed to be considered. With regard to evaluation and language training, he was pleased that reports would be issued shortly by the Secretariat.

65. In conclusion, while noting the plans for rebuilding at ECA outlined in section 35, on which he would comment at the appropriate time, he wished to stress the need for total rehabilitation instead of a piecemeal approach to the improvement of the Commission's functioning. ECA required a sound financial basis; its growth prospects had to be assured and the spirits of its staff lifted if it was to serve as a genuine focal point for economic and social development in Africa.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SIXTH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
26th meeting
held on
Thursday, 7 November 1991
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 26th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 115: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 115: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/46/370 and A/46/377;
A/C.5/46/2, 4 and Add.1, 7, 9, 13, 16 and 21)

1. Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria) said that the capacity of the United Nations to respond to the challenges arising as a result of the recent dramatic changes in the international scene would increasingly depend on the Organization's ability to secure and retain the services of staff of the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

2. While it was encouraging that the number of unrepresented States had decreased from 11 to 9 between 1 July 1990 and 30 June 1991, his delegation felt that much still needed to be done to address the imbalance in the staffing table. Accordingly he urged the Secretariat to step up its efforts to that end and welcomed the assurances that an active and systematic recruitment policy would be conducted to identify high-quality candidates, particularly in unrepresented and underrepresented countries. There was no lack of such candidates in every country, and special attention should be given to the developing countries, particularly African countries. He noted that the proportion of staff from developing countries occupying posts at the D-2 level and above had risen from 43.1 per cent in 1990 to 44.2 per cent in 1991, while the proportion of staff from other countries had fallen from 56.9 per cent to 55.8 per cent over the same period (A/46/377, annex II, table C). The positive trend should be maintained until there was an equitable distribution of posts at that level. In that connection he trusted that the Secretariat would keep in mind the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/185 A, paragraph 3, to the effect that no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State or group of States.

3. With respect to the report of the Secretary-General on alternative options for desirable ranges (A/C.5/46/2), his delegation agreed that the problem lay not in the methodology but, rather, in the relative weight to be given to the various factors, and preferred option K, referred to in paragraph 32 of the report, whereby the weight of the membership factor remained unchanged, while the weight of the population factor was increased and that of the contribution factor was reduced. Every effort should be made to bring all Member States within their desirable ranges.

4. The question of the representation of women remained an important issue to his delegation, which appreciated the considerable efforts made to achieve the targets set by the General Assembly, and, in particular, the special emergency measures taken by the Secretariat to that end. It was encouraging to note the increases in the proportion of women in geographical posts, as well as in posts at the D-1 level and above. Regrettably, the percentage of women from the African region was still far below the 30 per cent target. While there had been a minor increase in 1991, additional steps needed to be taken to increase their representation.

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(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

5. It was equally significant to note that progress had been made in the area of career development, especially for staff in the General Service category. His delegation agreed that a deliberate effort must be made to systematically update the substantive knowledge of Secretariat staff, as well as to strengthen their ability to deliver programmes and increase their interchangeability, so that they could cope with the challenges confronting the Organization in the 1990s. Further, the recommendations contained in document A/46/326 on the rotation of staff within the United Nations should be given due consideration with a view to implementing them. Rotation of staff should not, however, replace the employment of new staff where necessary in order to promote efficiency. In that connection his delegation opposed any proliferation of posts designed simply to cater to the career expectations of staff, particularly given the resource constraints under which the Organization was operating.

6. His delegation had given serious consideration to the views of the staff representatives (A/C.5/46/21) and acknowledged that most of the views were well founded, but also wished to underscore the expectation of Member States that the productivity and dedication of staff should be consistent with the purposes and objectives of the Organization.

7. Mr. TISLER (Czechoslovakia) said that the increasingly important role of the United Nations in maintaining peace and security had placed new and greater demands on the staff of the Organization. His delegation was well aware of the fact that United Nations staff must often carry out their duties under difficult and sometimes dangerous conditions. In that connection his delegation was concerned by the facts mentioned in document A/C.5/46/4, dealing with respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations, and hoped that consideration of the report would help to solve the problems which had jeopardized the lives of United Nations staff members in the discharge of their duties.

8. Discussion in the Committee had shown that further steps to strengthen and streamline the staff structure were needed. In that connection account should be taken of the recommendations of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts that the competence and experience of the staff must be primary considerations in recruitment and promotion procedures. The staff should be recruited on as wide a geographical basis as possible, and new vacancies should be filled through open examinations, such as the national competitive examinations, which represented an objective method of recruitment. His delegation supported the creation of a competitive recruitment examination for the P-2 and P-3 levels. Consideration should also be given to the possibility of establishing a "time in grade" limit for Professional staff, with the aim of eliminating less competent staff members. In 1991 national competitive examinations had been held in Prague for Czechoslovak citizens, and his delegation looked forward to the prompt recruitment of the candidates selected.

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(Mr. Tisler, Czechoslovakia)

9. As a result of the democratic changes in Czechoslovakia, a new approach had emerged to the question of Czechoslovak nationals working in the United Nations Secretariat. In February 1991 the Federal Government had adopted a decree removing any possible inconsistency between those citizens' rights and duties under existing Czechoslovak law and their status as independent international civil servants. Czechoslovakia was one of those countries which had used a system of secondment and intended to continue to make use of that practice in the future, since it was beneficial both to the Organization and its Member States. His delegation thought that review of documents A/C.5/46/9 and A/C.5/45/12, relating to future secondment procedures, should produce a simple procedure, one that would eliminate any possible misunderstanding. The procedure should be transparent and easy to understand, and should not restrict the role of Member States in personnel questions. His delegation was prepared to cooperate in reaching a consensus to that end. In that spirit he wished to receive clarification of how the new procedure proposed would be applied to those staff members who had been serving on secondment under the previous arrangement. In the interim period, before the new procedure was applied, the practice followed by the Secretariat in some specific cases had not been in conformity with the existing rules. In that connection his delegation fully associated itself with the remarks made by the representative of Poland.

10. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Arab Maghreb Union, said that according to the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/46/7), staff expenditures for the biennium 1992-1993 would amount to at least \$2,105.5 million. The report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/46/370) stated that the total number of staff of the United Nations was 29,246, of whom 13,973 were assigned to the Secretariat. The mobilization and management of such a large staff was of considerable importance to both the United Nations and Member States. Of the 13,973 Secretariat posts, only 2,600 were subject to geographic distribution. That was a very low proportion; the General Assembly should apply the principle of geographical distribution to a greater number of posts, whether financed from the regular budget or from extrabudgetary resources. Document A/46/370 indicated that staff in posts subject to geographical distribution were directly appointed by the Secretary-General for at least one year to posts in the Professional category and above. However, not all such posts were subject to geographical distribution. The States members of the Arab Maghreb Union believed that as many posts as possible in those categories should be subject to the principle of geographical distribution and that consideration also should be given to the possibility of applying the same principle to posts in other categories. The subsidiary bodies of the United Nations which enjoyed special status and appointed their own staff should respect the general principle of geographical distribution.

11. The States of the Arab Maghreb Union were grateful to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and his Office for their efforts to reduce the number of unrepresented and underrepresented States by

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(Mr. Zahid, Morocco)

holding national competitions and sending recruitment missions, and hoped that those efforts would be extended to Arab States which continued to be unrepresented or underrepresented.

12. Another key issue was the representation of developing countries in posts at the senior and policy-making levels of the Secretariat. Accordingly, it was encouraging to note the slight increase in the number of senior posts held by developing countries. The Secretariat should be urged to intensify its efforts to ensure the more equitable representation of developing countries, particularly African countries, which were the most disadvantaged. The Secretariat should offer shorter periods of service for senior posts to allow for the periodic rotation of heads of Secretariat departments and offices and the more equitable redistribution of posts. The principle enunciated in General Assembly resolution 35/210 to the effect that no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State, or group of States, should be applied strictly. The Arab Maghreb Union also believed that the different legal systems should be represented in the Secretariat. He recalled General Assembly resolution 45/239 A in that connection and urged that every effort be made to reach that objective.

13. With regard to the representation of women, while commendable progress had been made, the percentages continued to be below the figures established by the General Assembly. Accordingly, he urged the Secretariat to continue its efforts to attain the established objectives, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and the Staff Rules, particularly with respect to promotions.

14. According to the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/C.5/46/2, the method currently used for the geographical distribution of posts was adequate, but there were problems regarding the relative weight to be assigned to the various factors. There was no doubt that changing the weight of the three factors (membership, population and contribution) would make the existing system more equitable.

15. The representatives of the States members of the Arab Maghreb Union urged that the preparation of a general career development plan should be pursued more vigorously in order to increase the motivation of the Organization's staff, which was all the more necessary at a time when the United Nations was being called upon to play a more active role in many fields, including peace-keeping, economic and social development, drug abuse control, the environment and human rights. In order to retain the best qualified individuals on the United Nations staff, as required by the Charter, greater career development opportunities must be made available to them. It was important to prepare the report requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/185, and again at the forty-fifth session, on the review of rules, regulations and criteria used for the promotion of staff, efforts to ensure transparency in the work of the appointment and promotion bodies and the inclusion of effective and expeditious appeal and recourse mechanisms in

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(Mr. Zahid, Morocco)

the vacancy management programme. The representatives of the Secretariat should provide appropriate explanations in that regard. Furthermore, training and advanced training were very important factors, and the relevant activities should be expanded.

16. The administration of justice in the Secretariat was a question which merited close attention. The report of the Secretary-General on the subject, which was essentially descriptive in nature, did not deal with the real problems pertaining to the administration of justice in the Secretariat. It was to be hoped that the report which the Secretary-General would submit to the General Assembly at its next session would include specific measures to improve the administration of justice system in the Secretariat, bearing in mind, *inter alia*, the deficiencies noted in the functioning of the Committee on Applications for Review of Administrative Tribunal Judgements.

17. A completely independent international civil service was inconceivable unless respect for the privileges and immunities inherent therein was assured. In that connection, he expressed his concern at the illegal acts perpetrated against certain international officials engaged in carrying out their duties. The Secretary-General and Member States should endeavour to ensure the safety and protection of United Nations staff and their families and provide them with the assistance they required. For their part, international officials should discharge their functions in strict compliance with the mandate entrusted to them and the legislation of the host country.

18. Mr. ELDEEB (Egypt) stressed the importance of respect by Member State for the privileges and immunities of United Nations officials. In view of the changes taking place in the world and the tasks entrusted to the United Nations in the new world order, that importance was steadily increasing. Egypt shared the Secretary-General's concern at the large number of violations of the privileges and immunities of international staff, as shown in document A/C.5/46/4. That document contained details about officials of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East detained in or deported from the West Bank or Gaza Strip, but the authorities which had committed those violations were not identified as had been done in the case of other Member States (for example, in paras. 3 and 4, of annex II to the report). In that connection, mention should also be made of document A/C.5/46/21, containing the views of the staff representatives, which included lists of staff members whose rights and privileges had been violated. There were surprising discrepancies between the details given in that report and in the Secretary-General's report on the same subject. He asked the Secretariat to provide the General Assembly with an explanation at the current session and to correct the deficiencies in its report.

19. On the composition of the Secretariat, he said that the evolution of the role of the United Nations should be accompanied by greater interest in the Organization's human resources. It would be important to take steps for the equitable distribution of posts subject to geographical distribution, in

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(Mr. Eldeeb, Egypt)

particular by giving greater weight to the population factor, which had in the past accounted for a greater percentage than it did at present. In that connection, his delegation was gratified to note the Secretariat's considerable efforts to present various options and said that Egypt supported option J in paragraph 32 of the report (A/C.5/46/2). The implementation of that option could lay the foundation for a more equitable procedure for the distribution of posts.

20. In a different connection, he said that Egypt welcomed the report of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management to the Fifth Committee, in which he had said that the Secretariat was preparing proposals for a career development system. He looked forward to a report to the General Assembly on that topic.

21. Mr. SY (Senegal) said that his country had deep respect for the privileges and immunities of international officials, which imposed specific obligations on Member States and on the officials themselves. The former must take care to see that those privileges and immunities were fully respected and the latter must refrain from abusing them in order to enjoy impunity for activities unconnected with their professional duties. It was important to have a clear definition of the concept of an "international official" in order to prevent too wide or abusive an interpretation. In General Assembly resolution 45/240, the Secretary-General was requested, in compiling information for incorporation into the reports on that subject, to include, to the extent possible, the views of Member States on cases of the violation of privileges and immunities for which they might be responsible. Respect for that recommendation would allow the Fifth Committee to make a better evaluation of the matters drawn to its attention.

22. On the composition of the Secretariat, his delegation would like to see the activities designed to remedy the situation of unrepresented or underrepresented States continued and intensified. It also urged the Secretary-General, when recruiting staff, to continue to bear in mind the principle of equitable geographical distribution, which was perfectly compatible with the need to provide the Organization with officials having the highest qualifications, competence and integrity. He also stressed the Secretary-General's obligation to ensure respect for established procedures in the preparation and issuing of vacancy announcements.

23. The representation of women in the Secretariat continued to be a matter of concern, despite the corrective action taken by the Secretary-General. The rate of 29.2 per cent in June 1991, as against 26.3 per cent in June 1990, was a considerable improvement but the target of 30 per cent by the end of 1990 had still not been reached. At the current rate, there was a risk that the 35 per cent target set for 1995 would not be attained. Nor had there been sufficient progress in the appointment of women to posts at the D-1 level and above. His delegation recalled the General Assembly's decision, in paragraph 6 of its resolution 45/239 C, whereby the Secretary-General was

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(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

requested to develop an action programme for the advancement of women in the Secretariat. The Canadian delegation's assistance towards the fulfilment of that commitment was commendable; that generous example should be followed by other countries with a view to preventing further delay in the preparation of that important programme, which should contain specific measures to remedy the inadequate representation of women from certain Member States, the African countries in particular. The programme should also contain an in-depth analysis of existing Secretariat machinery in order to determine whether it was adequate and effective for the implementation of the programme. The effects of the programme would to a large extent depend on the system for the representation of Member States, and thus on desirable ranges.

24. On the question of desirable ranges, he agreed with the Secretary-General that the solution to the problem lay not in the adoption of a new methodology for determining desirable ranges but rather in making careful adjustments in the various parameters that were used in order to ensure a geographical distribution more in keeping with the spirit of the Charter. Too marked an imbalance between the percentages corresponding to the factors that determined the desirable ranges would be prejudicial to the task of building a new world order based on the equality of States and shared responsibilities. Accordingly, Senegal preferred option J, but could accept option F if that would make it possible to reach a consensus.

25. He considered the amendments to the Staff Regulations annexed to document A/C.5/46/9 acceptable in principle, although he had some doubts about the paragraph (c) which it was proposed to add to annex II of the Staff Regulations. The validity of a secondment from national government service could not be determined without taking into account the relevant national legislative provisions. He would therefore like more details regarding the content of that paragraph. The question of secondment should also be examined in the light of the provisions of paragraph 10 of resolution 45/239 A, in which the Secretary-General was requested to consider measures in order to ensure, to the extent possible, the representation of the main legal systems in the Secretariat.

26. On the question of the administration of justice in the Secretariat, he said that his delegation's recent participation in the work of the Committee on Applications for Review of Administrative Tribunal Judgements led it to question that body's effectiveness. The Committee consisted of the members of the General Committee of the General Assembly, which changed every year except for the permanent members of the Security Council. That raised a problem of continuity and effectiveness, since most of the Committee's members never succeeded in fully grasping its rules and procedures. The Committee's mandate was very limited in that the representatives of Member States were not empowered to decide on the substance of the judgements questioned and were confined to responding to a series of rigidly formulated questions. That was perhaps why the Committee had requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice only three times since it had been

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

established. While that situation was in part justified by a desire to avoid the Committee being converted into an appeals body, its method of operation needed to be improved.

27. Mr. BELKHEIR (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/46/370), posts subject to geographical distribution remained a small percentage of the total. For that reason, the principles determining the number of such posts must be reviewed. The fact that nine Member States were unrepresented was a cause for concern and that situation should be remedied immediately. Nationals of overrepresented Member States were still being recruited; that constituted a failure to observe the spirit of the Charter and the resolutions of the General Assembly. In its resolution 45/239 A, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to take every available measure to ensure, at the senior and policy-formulating levels of the Secretariat, the equitable representation of Member States, in particular of developing countries and Member States with inadequate representation at those levels, and to include relevant information in future reports on the composition of the Secretariat. Despite that, developing countries continued to be inadequately represented at senior levels of the Secretariat and certain countries were still monopolizing some posts.

28. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was one developing country that was underrepresented, especially at the senior level, despite having submitted many candidates. The Secretariat had made many promises that it had not kept. Although he acknowledged the past restrictions imposed by the need to enhance the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, the freeze on recruitment and the reduction in posts, he considered that the situation had changed and that it was no longer possible to justify not keeping the Secretariat's promises.

29. With respect to the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/46/377), he acknowledged the progress made towards increasing the number of women in posts subject to geographical distribution and reaffirmed the need to respect fully the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with General Assembly resolutions 45/125 and 45/239 C. To that end, it was necessary to recruit a larger number of women from developing countries to fill vacant posts at the senior and policy-formulating levels.

30. His delegation regretted the cases of the abduction, detention and killing of international officials as a result of the actions of certain Member States which did not respect their privileges and immunities. He also noted that some Member States did not observe section 18 (b), article V, of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations which provided that officials of the United Nations should be exempt from taxation on the salaries and emoluments paid to them by the Organization.

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31. Mr. BAZAN (Chile) pointed out the need to make maximum use of the qualities and abilities of United Nations officials and expressed concern at the low morale among the staff. Member States were largely responsible for that and had a duty to remedy the situation.

32. He was grateful to the Secretary-General for maintaining the excellent standards of the Secretariat staff at a time when there was an increasingly acute shortage of financial resources, and to the staff members themselves for their professionalism, dedication and sacrifices.

33. When appointing Secretariat staff, it was important to maintain the principles of efficiency, competence and integrity laid down in the Charter. The Secretary-General had made laudable efforts to ensure that, while observing those criteria, the aspiration of Member States for equitable representation should be met and women should achieve appropriate representation.

34. With regard to the desirable ranges for the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional category and above, it was essential to attach more importance to membership than to any other factor and to ensure that every country had the possibility of its nationals filling posts subject to geographical distribution.

35. His delegation reiterated the advisability of considering the establishment of a tribunal to which it would be possible to appeal against judgements of the Administrative Tribunal, because article 11 of its Statute did confer that power on the Committee on Applications for Review of Administrative Tribunal Judgements. That would provide a forum for appeals by United Nations staff. He looked forward with interest to the report on the subject to be submitted by the Secretary-General at the forty-seventh session.

36. Mr. KARBUCZKY (Hungary) said that personnel questions could be better examined biennially, because that would allow longer-term trends to be examined. His delegation noted with satisfaction the increase in the number of Hungarians working for the United Nations, but pointed out that the highest ranking was merely at the P-4 level. Among the numerous candidates presented by Hungary, there must be persons qualified to occupy much higher posts as well.

37. When recruiting for a vacant post, the Secretariat considered the qualifications of the candidate and the representation of the country from which the candidate came. The group of countries from which the candidate came was outside the scope of the process. Presenting statistics relating to the composition of the Secretariat according to a simple alphabetical list of Member States was therefore preferable to presenting them according to groups of countries, because, although that system showed a relatively even representation of developing and other countries, it hid drastic differences within any given group.

(Mr. Karbuczky, Hungary)

38. Despite the increase in the representation of women in the Secretariat in both relative and absolute terms, the percentage of Eastern European women remained very low. He pointed out with some satisfaction, that almost 50 per cent of the Hungarian staff members in the Secretariat were women.

39. With regard to the desirable ranges for the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional and higher categories, the major factors must be membership and contribution, and any drastic change in their current relative weightings should be avoided. Since the population factor was already taken into consideration when calculating the scale of assessments of Member States, its weighting should be limited so as to avoid any duplication of its effect.

40. With regard to paragraph 15 of document A/C.5/46/4, which summarized an exchange of communications between the Secretariat and the Permanent Mission of Hungary with regard to the taxation of international officials, his Government was waiting for clarification from the Secretariat regarding the persons involved in order to ascertain whether the provisions of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations were relevant to the case in question.

41. The proposals of the Secretary-General on secondment from government service contained in document A/C.5/46/9 would help to establish a truly independent international civil service, but in order to achieve a lasting and satisfactory solution it would be necessary to take into consideration the interests of all three parties, namely, the Organization, staff members and Member States. Hungarians could accept the type of contract most beneficial to the Organization, bearing in mind that a combination of permanent and fixed-term contracts would probably be the best solution. Unlike previous years, only 33 per cent of the Hungarians currently employed by the United Nations were on fixed-term contracts, and none of them at the insistence of the Government.

42. As to whether the right to replacement should be retained or "normal" recruitment and placement procedures should prevail was puzzling, since the practice of replacement was authorized by General Assembly resolution 35/210, while the so-called "normal" vacancy management was criticized to such an extent that it was hard to know what "normal" meant.

43. One of the first competitive examinations for posts at the P-3 level had been held in Hungary. Early results were promising, and Hungary welcomed the Secretariat's intention to expand the scope of those examinations. Since the majority of recruitments to P-1, P-2 and P-3 posts in recent years had occurred through such examinations, his delegation wished to see the whole process of planning and holding examinations and the placement of successful candidates better coordinated. It was to be hoped that the proposed redeployment would enable the Examination and Tests Section to carry out its increased responsibilities in that regard.

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44. Ms. MOSS (Bahamas) said that only if the Secretariat, delegations and Governments of Member States played their part in ensuring implementation of the principle of equitable geographical distribution could the goals of the United Nations Charter be realized: the Secretariat must analyse the problems of the United Nations system and establish guidelines for solving them; delegations must present the needs and concerns of their countries and formulate recommendations for remedying inequalities; and, lastly, Governments must prepare candidates to enable the Secretariat to maintain the highest standards of efficiency. While the Secretariat and delegations had fulfilled their obligations, it looked as if the Governments of some unrepresented or underrepresented countries had been unable to produce candidates with the necessary professional qualifications, while, conversely, candidates who were properly qualified had sometimes been overlooked. The Secretariat could help correct both problems by organizing training programmes in unrepresented or underrepresented countries to acquaint their Governments with issues pertaining to the international civil service.

45. Recruitment should be based on two considerations: the need for equitable representation of all Member States at all levels of the Secretariat and the principle that appointments must be based on the candidate's having appropriate qualifications for the job. Consequently, the Secretariat must not apply rigid procedures or impose conditions that would automatically exclude many young people and candidates from developing countries: factors such as experience, age, background and capability should not be regarded as exclusive criteria; candidates must be given the opportunity to prove themselves through on-the-job training, but without any lowering of standards.

46. The practice of secondment had advantages and disadvantages; it certainly permitted the recruitment of experienced and professionally qualified staff and helped to maintain a balance between fixed-term and career appointments, but it could also give the impression that United Nations staff were not truly independent and responsible only to the Secretary-General. It should be pointed out in that connection that Governments that persuaded national officials to work for international organizations by supplementing their salary were violating the principle of equal pay for equal work and compromising the independence of those officials, contrary to the provisions of Article 100 of the Charter. Apart from that potential danger and the fact that secondment involved more frequent rotation of staff members, resulting in higher administrative costs and loss of efficiency, the advantages of secondment outweighed its disadvantages, and it should be used as long as the Organization maintained a permanent core of highly qualified personnel.

47. Her delegation was concerned that Governments were neglecting their duty regarding the safety and protection of international staff, particularly in view of the Organization's growing operational activities. As increasing numbers of staff were working in troubled areas, Governments must be urged to respect the privileges and immunities of United Nations staff, who in turn must be urged to observe the laws of Member States while carrying out their duties.

(Ms. Moss, Bahamas)

48. Bearing in mind that the United Nations was at the forefront of efforts for the advancement of women, it was paradoxical that women's position in the Organization was a mere reflection of the situation within Member States: efforts had yielded quantitative rather than qualitative results, and even quantitative progress had been slow; according to available statistics, the situation at the higher levels of the Secretariat was particularly unsatisfactory. Although qualifications must be the deciding criterion in recruitment and promotion, affirmative action programmes favouring women must continue until established targets had been attained, while highly technical organizations, which had the greatest difficulty in recruiting women, should consider outreach training programmes. Career development was another realm in which the situation of women needed improvement, so that their progress up the career ladder might be as rapid as that of their male colleagues. In that context, she welcomed the Secretary-General's approval of recommendations of the Steering Committee for the Improvement of the Status of Women concerning the promotion, assignment and recruitment of women.

49. In considering personnel questions there were three main issues: the first was the distribution of higher-level posts; in accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/239, those posts should not be considered "the exclusive preserve" of any Member State. The Secretary-General should therefore be requested to take every available measure to ensure the equitable representation of Member States at the senior and policy-making levels of the Secretariat, particularly in the case of developing countries and Member States inadequately represented at those levels. The second problem was the formulas for "desirable ranges" for Member States; her delegation would accept any of the alternatives under consideration, provided it was workable; however, every effort should be made to implement existing procedures fully before any new proposals were adopted. The third issue concerned the possibility of increasing the number of posts subject to geographical distribution; that would require a cautious approach, taking budgetary considerations into account and bearing in mind that an increase in the number of posts would not automatically guarantee equitable distribution. Existing imbalances must first be corrected.

50. She had refrained from mentioning her own country's underrepresentation because she believed that if the broad preoccupations she had referred to were addressed, the situation of The Bahamas would be resolved. It was the Committee's responsibility to make recommendations that would form the basis for a plan of action for a Secretariat structure which reflected the principles and provisions of the Charter.

51. Mr. SENA CARDOSO (Brazil) said that although Brazil's representation in the Secretariat had thus far been lower than expected and desired, his delegation had noted in the past few months a greater interest among Brazilian professionals in the activities of the Organization and career prospects in the international civil service. He therefore hoped that candidates selected in the competitive examinations held in Brazil in 1990 would soon be filling vacancies as they arose.

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(Mr. Sena Cardoso, Brazil)

52. Brazil, which had generally been underrepresented, noted with satisfaction the efforts that had been made to correct the underrepresentation of certain Member States in posts subject to equitable geographical distribution.

53. His delegation would support all measures aimed at bringing Member States participation as close as possible to the mid-point of their desirable range. However, there was room for improvement in the formula used in calculating the desirable ranges: greater justice would be done if the 7.2 per cent weight attributed to the population factor was restored. His delegation wholeheartedly endorsed the proposal by the representative of India in his statement on the agenda item before the Committee.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly
FORTY-SIXTH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
27th meeting
held on
Friday, 8 November 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 27th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 107: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993
(continued) (A/46/6/Rev.1 and A/46/7)

AGENDA ITEM 108: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/46/16 and Add.1, A/46/173
and A/46/330)

First reading (continued)

Section 23. Economic Commission for Africa (continued)

1. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that her delegation supported the programmes for African economic recovery and development and believed that the high level of resource allocation and 2.7 per cent rate of real growth in section 23 were justified. It was confident that ECA would use the resources made available to it in an efficient and effective manner to achieve the greatest possible benefit.

2. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom) said that his delegation also wished to express its support for programmes for the economic development and recovery of Africa and its appreciation of the acute difficulties facing that continent, regarding which representatives of African States had already spoken in the Committee with sincerity and eloquence. It was important to recognize, however, that resources available through the regular budget were finite and there was no more challenging task for the Fifth Committee than to choose between competing claims on those resources and to ensure that they were used to maximum effect. Concerning suggestions that the Secretary-General's proposals either in section 23 or elsewhere in the budget submission might not be adequate, his delegation would prefer, in the interests of a consensus, to proceed systematically on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, which was the competent technical body to consider such matters. It therefore reserved the right to comment on any proposals for the allocation of resources, on the basis of political considerations, in excess of the Secretary-General's submission as endorsed or modified by the Advisory Committee.

3. While his delegation had some misgivings, it could support the proposals regarding both the multinational programming and operational centres (MULPOCs) and training activities, but hoped that general agreement could be reached through informal consultations to provide for effective monitoring of and reporting on those reconstituted programmes. As to the method of funding for the Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS) and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), his delegation did not wish to see their activities weakened by disputes about mandated expenditures but expected that the divergent views in that regard would also be taken into account in the informal discussions.

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(Mr. Kinchen, United Kingdom)

4. With respect to the concerns expressed regarding extrabudgetary resources, it should be remembered that the Secretariat's practice was quite justifiably to make conservative estimates and that, in the case of ECA, the projected \$30.3 million in extrabudgetary expenditures for 1990-1991 had later been revised upwards to \$37.2 million, an increase of nearly 25 per cent in nominal terms. Similarly, the estimated contribution from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had been revised upwards from \$11.6 million to \$19.2 million, representing an even more substantial rise. The lower projections for resources that would become available from UNDP in 1992-1993, as compared with the current biennium, could no doubt be explained with reference to the decisions taken by the UNDP Governing Council on revised arrangements for execution of UNDP-funded activities. In that regard, his delegation's understanding was that there would be an increase, and not a decrease, in UNDP's resource allocation for projects relating to Africa; the resources would simply be used in a different way from before, with less being channelled through ECA and other regional bodies and greater reliance being placed on national execution. Thus, section 23 by no means reflected the totality of United Nations or other resources devoted to African economic recovery and development.

5. Much of the discussion in the Committee had centred on the question of growth rates as a test of how far budget sections reflected priorities. His delegation, however, was increasingly convinced that the methodology for calculating growth in recurrent expenditures was producing results that were misleading or even meaningless. A more useful indicator might be the number of posts on the staffing table. In the case of ECA, the rate of post reductions applied in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/213 had been among the lowest for any section and the staffing level had since been raised so that there were currently 596 regular budget posts and 175 extrabudgetary posts for a sizeable total of 771.

6. In any event, the real point at issue was surely whether the Fifth Committee was satisfied that resources would be used to optimum effect. It had been suggested that ECA was being left on the periphery of efforts to deal with the African crisis but his delegation trusted that the Commission would have a more central role. It was important to ensure that its meetings, seminars and other activities contributed effectively to dealing with that crisis while bearing in mind that regular budget funding was necessarily limited.

7. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), replying to questions raised during the discussion, observed that many delegations had sought information about changes in the ECA programme of work. Generally speaking, the current presentation of the proposed programme budget allowed the Secretariat to indicate only the form, and not the content, of programmatic changes. The same comment applied to the question of priorities. Innovation might be considered in consultation with the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

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(Mr. Baudot)

8. The question raised by the representative of Ethiopia concerning the proposed shift of resources away from social sectors within the ECA programme in part reflected the problem of presentation. In fact, only one P-5 post was to be redeployed. The Secretariat was endeavouring to ensure the best possible use of resources and took note of the recommendation in the CPC report (A/46/16, para. 312) that there should be no adverse impact in the programme delivery in that sector.

9. Regarding the impact of the translator/précis-writer training programme on temporary assistance requirements, he could not provide an exact figure for the time being. The question of full translation and interpretation services would, of course, continue to receive attention but it was not currently economical to establish such services on a permanent basis at Addis Ababa.

10. With regard to the decline in support from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), \$90,000 had been provided in 1990-1991 for two seminars but it was not envisaged that similar activities would be financed by UNIDO in 1992-1993. More information on that subject would be given during the informal consultations.

11. In response to the comments made by the United Kingdom representative, he confirmed that the apparent decline in UNDP funding for ECA projects merely reflected a different distribution of the total resources available. He did, however, recognize that a detailed breakdown would be useful for informal discussions on that fundamental issue.

12. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the conclusions and recommendations of CPC regarding section 23 contained in paragraphs 310 to 314 of its report (A/46/16).

13. It was so decided.

14. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$67,089,800 under section 23 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 was approved in first reading, on the understanding that the issues raised in connection with section 23 would be considered in informal consultations and any necessary adjustments made.

Section 24. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

15. Ms. BERENGUER (Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Coordination) said that the conclusions and recommendations of CPC on section 24 referred basically to priorities. The question of the large number of high priority designations had been raised. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) had approved the priority designations at the subprogramme level; CPC recommended that it should review them at the output level and should continue its efforts to evaluate its publications.

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16. Mr. ZARI-ZARRE (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the resources allocated to ESCAP were insufficient in comparison with those allocated to other regional commissions. Extrabudgetary resources were not a sufficient substitute means of financing the Commission's activities.

17. Mr. GREGG (Australia) said that his delegation supported the CPC conclusions and recommendations. As a member of ESCAP his country took a special interest in the efficiency and, what was more important, the effectiveness of the Commission's activities. A direct relationship did not necessarily exist between resource allocations and useful outputs. The question was really how well ESCAP served the interests of the region as reflected in the priorities established by intergovernmental bodies. At recent ESCAP meetings there had been some agreement on the priorities now set out in section 24.6 of the proposed programme budget, but the estimates did not reflect the balance of those priorities. In CPC his delegation had tried unsuccessfully to obtain an explanation for the proposed distribution of resources. It continued to object to the provision of additional resources in real terms for activities not accorded high priority by Member States. There was considerable scope for rationalization of ESCAP activities, for it was not making the most effective use of its resources. Australia was not convinced that the proposed increases for support activities and the new posts were justified.

18. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the conclusions and recommendations of CPC regarding section 24 contained in paragraphs 323 to 326 of its report (A/46/16).

19. It was so decided.

20. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$47,450,700 under section 24 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 was approved in first reading, on the understanding that the issues raised in connection with section 24 would be considered in informal consultations and any necessary adjustments made.

Section 25. Economic Commission for Europe

21. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom) said that, as the Advisory Committee had pointed out, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) had seriously re-examined its role in the light of the changing situation in Europe and had identified the five priority areas mentioned in paragraph 25.3 of the ACABQ report (A/46/7). Paragraph 25.5 of the report set out the many proposed redeployments resulting from the analysis made by the ECE secretariat, but the redeployments did not always correspond to the priority areas identified by ECE. It was not clear why a net addition was proposed to the staffing table, since in its decision O (45) the Commission had said that additional human resources would be provided from within its current budget and that all activities not identified as priorities might have to work in some cases within the context of diminished resources.

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22. Mr. PANOV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation attached particular importance to the activities of ECE and to its own participation in them. The new priorities established by the Commission fully corresponded to his country's concerns and would help to ensure better use of resources. The changes in the Commission's structure and methods would also enhance the efficiency of its activities. The degree of success achieved in those two areas would largely determine the future role of ECE in the development of European cooperation. Its activities should be carried out in close coordination with all the relevant international organizations. His delegation fully supported the conclusions and recommendations of CPC on the section.

23. Mr. MORCZINSKI (Poland) noted that the programme of work of ECE was aimed at strengthening coordination and promoting international economic cooperation in the region. The Commission should focus its attention on the transformation and integration of the economies of the countries that were currently in transition. Its assistance was particularly important for those countries in view of the difficulties which they were encountering with respect both to the traditional Soviet market and to access to the market of the European Community. His delegation fully supported the proposals contained in section 25.

24. Mr. GOUDIMA (Ukraine) said that his delegation attached importance to the ECE activities designed to strengthen coordination and promote international economic cooperation in the region. Table 25.3 in the budget document showed an overall rate of real growth of 1.3 per cent and hardly reflected the large volume of work planned for the Commission. The figures did testify to the effort made by the Commission to reorder its priorities, but his delegation could not agree in all cases with the apportionment of resources among the various programmes and subprogrammes. In particular it had doubts about the reductions in the rate of real growth of the energy subprogramme by 13.5 per cent, in science and technology by 33.8 per cent, and in international trade and development finance by 1.8 per cent. Against that background, the increase of 37.4 per cent under executive direction and management was puzzling.

25. His delegation supported the Commission's intention to increase expenditure on its environment subprogramme by 22.9 per cent in real terms. The subprogramme was a vital one for Ukraine because of its serious environmental situation. His delegation was grateful in particular for the Commission's participation in the efforts to mitigate the effects of the Chernobyl accident and it hoped that the Chernobyl problem would be reflected in future programmes of work. It also attached importance to subprogramme 1 (Development issues and policies), which included measures for the economic development of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and assistance with their economic reforms during the transitional period. The reference under subprogramme 6 (International trade and development finance) to the creation of more favourable conditions for foreign direct investment was welcome, and his delegation stressed the importance in subprogramme 9 (Transport,

(Mr. Goudima, Ukraine)

communications and tourism) of the activities connected with the transport of dangerous goods. The proposal made in paragraph 25.56 for the establishment of an additional post to service the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods was justified.

26. Despite some shortcomings, the proposed programme budget for ECE, subject to the changes recommended by the Advisory Committee, was fully justified and had his delegation's support.

27. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the conclusion and recommendation of CPC regarding section 25 contained in paragraph 334 of its report (A/46/16).

28. It was so decided.

29. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$41,080,900 under section 25 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 was approved in first reading, on the understanding that the issues raised in connection with section 25 would be considered in informal consultations and any necessary adjustments made.

Section 26. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

30. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that a question had been raised about the accuracy of the forecasts of extrabudgetary resources and the different policy for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the region. The figures given in table 26.1, which showed a significant decline in the operational projects of UNDP and UNFPA, were accurate to the best of the Secretariat's knowledge and reflected a considerable change in the way in which the two organizations would operate in the region.

31. Ms. BERENGUER (Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Coordination) noted that in paragraph 338 of its report CPC recommended two changes in the programme narrative of section 26.

32. Mr. MEZZALAMA (Italy) said that his delegation endorsed the positive judgement of CPC on the proposals made under section 26. It was particularly aware of the difficult tasks facing the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in helping all the countries of the region to develop the basic requirements of their structures and policies, a point stressed in paragraphs 33.85 and 33.86 of the medium-term plan. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals, which confirmed the principle that rational and effective utilization of staff could be the best way to deal with changing circumstances. Since a decline in extrabudgetary funds was anticipated for the biennium, it was to be hoped that the joint unit of ECLAC and the Centre on Transnational Corporations would succeed in attracting foreign investments. The present situation made it all the more important for the proposed appropriations to be approved.

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33. Mr. BAZAN (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the format of the budget document reflected the interests of the region and its priorities. The volume of resources proposed for ECLAC was acceptable, although the anticipated decline in extrabudgetary resources was regrettable. Perhaps the Secretariat could give information about the practical consequences of that decline for the work of ECLAC.

34. Despite the enormous effort which it had made in recent years, the region was still facing serious economic and social problems. In that connection, the Rio Group recognized the importance of the work done by the regional commissions and by ECLAC in particular. It endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of CPC on the section, particularly the recommendation concerning economic integration and cooperation, a process which was gaining ground in the region. ECLAC should in fact incorporate in its programme a topic devoted exclusively to integration matters. The Rio Group would be reluctant to see any reduction in science and technology activities and it stressed the importance of the inclusion of tourism as a subregional activity in the Caribbean.

35. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), responding to the question put by the representative of Chile, said that all he could say at the present stage was that one consequence of the decline in extrabudgetary resources would be the cancellation from January 1992 of one third of the UNFPA posts, i.e. ten out of 30, providing support for the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE). He would try to give fuller information in the informal consultations.

36. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the conclusions and recommendations of CPC regarding section 26 contained in paragraphs 338 and 339 of its report (A/46/16).

37. It was so decided.

38. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount \$71,809,700 under section 26 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 was approved in first reading, on the understanding that the issues raised in connection with section 26 would be considered in informal consultations and any necessary adjustments made.

Section 27. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

39. The CHAIRMAN, replying to a question from Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), suggested that the Committee should defer its consideration of section 27 in view of the fact that, as indicated in the Advisory Committee's report (A/46/7, para. 27.1), the resources for that section had been included in the proposed programme budget for 1992-1993 at the maintenance level, on the understanding that a proposed programme of work and detailed resource justifications would be prepared at a later stage.

40. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that section 27 of the budget document actually contained only five tables and there was no breakdown of programmes and subprogrammes or programme narrative. He had been informed that revised estimates had already been prepared and would be submitted to the Fifth Committee through the Advisory Committee, which would issue a corresponding addendum to its report on the proposed programme budget.
41. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that he could confirm the information provided to the Advisory Committee and fully expected that the relevant budget documentation would be available by the following week.
42. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was satisfied by the Secretariat's assurances that the revised estimates would be provided to the Committee through ACABQ in time for it to complete its first reading of the proposed programme budget.
43. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee would defer its consideration of section 27 until the revised estimates and other documentation had been received.
44. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that since the Committee was concluding for the moment its first reading of the sections concerning the regional economic commissions, he repeated the request which he had made at the 25th meeting that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee comment further on the application of the general reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee to a number of regional commissions.
45. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in his introductory comments on section 23 at the 25th meeting he had also commented on the Advisory Committee's recommendation not to apply the general reduction to the regional economic commissions. After further discussion the Advisory Committee had concluded that, since ECE enjoyed a considerable amount of support from the United Nations Office at Geneva, it would be fair to apply some general reduction to that Commission. Paragraph 25.2 of the ACABQ report mentioned the administration, conference and general services support for ECE, which was conservatively estimated at \$32.4 million. The sum of that figure and the actual expenses for 1988-1989 of about \$31.9 million gave a conservative idea of the resources available to ECE. The Advisory Committee had therefore concluded that part of the general reduction applicable to the United Nations Office at Geneva, a total of \$137,300, should be reapportioned to ECE. Such a small amount should not be detrimental to the Commission's programme of work.

Section 28. Human rights

46. Mr. BAUDOT (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that one reason for the budget growth proposed under section 28 was the creation of a D-2 post, the incumbent of which would be Director and Deputy to the Head of the Centre for Human Rights. Apart from its Head, the Centre had no other posts above the D-1 level. A number of redeployments were also proposed, including one D-1 post from executive direction and management to the Technical and Information Branch.

47. The estimate for the Centre included \$1.5 million for preparations for the World Conference on Human Rights. The Third Committee had before it the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, and the Secretariat would shortly be presenting a statement of the financial implications of that report. If the amount involved was higher than \$1.5 million, the contingency fund procedure would come into play.

48. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that not every member of the Advisory Committee was happy with the recommendations that it was making in an effort to assist the Fifth Committee to reach an understanding. The recommendations were in fact a compromise. In various paragraphs of its report, the Committee proposed that the additional posts requested by the Secretary-General should be established on a temporary basis, giving its reasons in each case. He did not expect everyone to accept the Advisory Committee's reasoning and it was understandable if some did not, because the question of human rights posts was an issue on which many Member States had different points of view.

49. In the case of the posts requested in connection with the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (A/46/7, para. 28.9), he wished to make it clear that the Advisory Committee was not rejecting the Secretary-General's proposals. It was simply saying that the posts should be established when the Convention entered into force, because it had been informed that only one of the required 20 ratifications had materialized so far. In the Advisory Committee's opinion, it was unlikely that the total of 20 ratifications would be received in 1992. The Advisory Committee was therefore recommending that the posts should be created but that funding should be discounted, so that resources would be provided as from 1993.

50. With reference to the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, the figure of \$1.5 million included in the estimate for the Centre for Human Rights in respect of preparations for the Conference was the same as that communicated to the Advisory Committee and the General Assembly in 1990. The Advisory Committee would re-examine the figure in the light of the results of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference.

51. Ms. BERENGUER (Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Coordination) said that the question of the creation of additional posts was one to which the general recommendation of CPC that such action required more justification appeared to be applicable. The CPC recommended approval of the programme narrative of section 28.

52. Mrs. ANZOLA (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Human Rights had approved a decision on the holding of regional conferences, as part of the preparatory process, whose financing would be considered as part of the budget for the Conference. The Rio Group countries would like an assurance that when the figure of \$1.5 million mentioned in paragraph 28.35 of the proposed programme budget was reviewed, the financing of regional conferences as part of the preparatory process would be included.

53. Mr. COHEN (United States of America) said that his delegation strongly supported United Nations human rights programmes and was disappointed that the proposed programme budget allocated such a small percentage of resources to them. A significant portion of the proposed real growth in section 28 related to the conversion of funds for temporary staff whose posts were to be established. The conversion would not increase the level of staff supporting activities relating to Special Rapporteurs and fact-finding, but the establishment of permanent posts should eliminate some of the recruitment difficulties facing the Centre in that area. As there was a need to ensure sufficient temporary assistance for such activities, his delegation would like to have confirmation that some of the resources allocated to the Centre for temporary assistance would be available for short-term personnel to assist the Special Rapporteurs.

54. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations, particularly those concerning the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus. It would like to have details on the progress made by that Committee and an explanation why its expenses were included in section 28. As the Committee had been established on the initiative of the Secretary-General, it might be desirable to transfer its budget to section 1, which would permit better supervision of its activities and expenditures. His delegation would appreciate a response from the Secretariat on those two points.

55. The most recent United Nations Yearbook on Human Rights to be issued covered the year 1985. An effort was needed to reduce the backlog. His delegation wished to know which volumes the Secretariat planned to publish during 1992-1993. Publication of the Yearbook was clearly a low priority and the resources allocated to it should be reduced in view of the very important work of the Centre and its increasing workload in other areas. Another possible saving could be made by eliminating the production of wall charts and calendars projected in paragraph 28.22 of the proposed programme budget.

56. In conclusion, his delegation had to express its reservations about a number of activities conducted by the Centre. It did not believe that the

(Mr. Cohen, United States)

work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories would contribute to solving the problems of the Middle East. With regard to the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, his delegation's practice was not to participate in any decisions relating to its work programme or budget.

57. Mr. LEV (Israel) said that his delegation was against the activities of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories and objected to the proposed appropriation for them. The resources allocated for that Committee could be better used for other purposes.

58. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) said that his delegation supported all human rights activities except those undertaken for political purposes. It wanted more resources for collective human rights activities and greater efforts to protect the economic and social rights of people suffering from lack of resources. Deprivation caused a great deal of suffering in developed and developing countries alike.

59. In view of the fact that human rights, despite their great importance, were not among the five priorities set for the next biennium, his delegation was surprised at the proposals in section 28 for real growth of 10.9 per cent and the establishment of 17 new posts at the Centre for Human Rights. It could not understand the latter proposal in particular, because the previous session of the General Assembly had stated that approval for such posts would depend on the Secretariat's analysis of the Centre's workload, which was still not available. Unless the Secretariat could provide an explanation, his delegation would be unable to accept the proposal to establish 17 new posts and also, therefore, the proposed distribution of resources, even in first reading. There was a considerable imbalance in the distribution of resources, with two subprogrammes accounting for over 76 per cent of the total while others received little. His delegation trusted that there would be a thorough discussion of that problem during the informal consultations.

60. His delegation's ultimate position on the provision for the World Conference on Human Rights would depend on the report from the first session of the Preparatory Committee. It hoped that the necessary decisions would be taken and that the financing of regional preparatory conferences would be included. Meanwhile, it could not approve the estimate even on a provisional basis.

61. Ms. ROEDSMOEN (Norway), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that they attached immense importance to United Nations human rights activities. Because expectations of those activities had grown considerably, the Nordic countries were greatly concerned at the lack of adequate resources for the Centre for Human Rights. The justifications for the proposed growth in section 28 were reasonable and were further strengthened by the report of

(Ms. Roedsmoen, Norway)

the Secretary-General in document A/46/603, with its references to the Centre's increased workload and the new mandates established since the budget proposals were completed.

62. The Centre's growing workload was most apparent in such areas as the activities of human rights treaty-monitoring bodies and the handling of complaints under the procedures governed by Economic and Social Council resolution 1503 (XLVIII) and the Optional Protocol. In addition, increased activities related to the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had not been matched by an increase in regular resources, and requests for advisory services and technical assistance had grown considerably. Long-term solutions must be found, on the basis of a plan endowed with adequate resources.

63. Because additional temporary assistance was still very necessary, especially in such areas as fact-finding and special procedures arising from decisions of human rights bodies, the Nordic countries did not agree with the Advisory Committee's recommendation to reduce the provision for general temporary assistance by a further \$188,100. They welcomed the conversion of some temporary posts but the Centre still suffered from understaffing and the existing difficult situation would remain virtually unchanged unless more personnel could be assigned on a temporary basis until a solution was found.

64. In conclusion, section 28 had suffered more than its fair share of the across-the-board cuts recommended by the Advisory Committee. The Nordic countries did not believe that the history of underutilized resources in the human rights and humanitarian affairs section during previous bienniums could justify the size of the proposed general cuts. The United Nations must respond to international concern about human rights and the increasing workload resulting from the legal obligations undertaken by Member States by securing adequate resources for United Nations human rights activities.

65. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the Twelve States members of the European Community, said that they believed the Secretary-General's proposals in section 28 to be a step in the right direction but questioned whether they addressed the structural problem of adequate staffing of the Centre for Human Rights. The report of the Secretary-General in document A/46/603 confirmed the increasing workload on the Centre resulting from the demands of Member States. The Twelve believed that the increase made longer-term solutions urgently necessary. They would therefore like some clarification from the Secretariat with respect to paragraph 28.5 in the Advisory Committee's report, in view of the establishment of new mandates since completion of the budget proposals.

66. The Twelve were very concerned by the staffing situation at the Centre, certain sections of which faced shortages that were not reflected in section 28. Existing treaty bodies had been facing constraints for a long time and the newly established Committee on the Rights of the Child would need

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(Mr. Spaans, Netherlands)

adequate resources to deal with a potentially rapid increase in its workload. It was also questionable whether the need for additional human resources to handle complaints under the Optional Protocol and other treaty-based procedures had been addressed. According to the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/603, para. 12), the proposals did not take account of the additional workload resulting from decisions taken at the forty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights. The resources required as a result of those decisions should be taken into account in the budget proposals and, again, the Twelve would be grateful for information from the Secretariat about how that affected the statement in paragraph 28.5 of the Advisory Committee's report.

67. Another respect in which the budget proposals did not appear to reflect the needs of the Centre was that of the Special Procedures Section, and there were problems of understaffing in areas of activity related to the prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities and vulnerable groups. The Centre's increasing workload in respect of advisory services and technical assistance also required additional human and financial resources.

68. In real terms, the growth rate of 10.9 per cent over the revised estimates for 1990-1991 was not so impressive. Moreover, the growth included the four posts approved by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session and mentioned in the Advisory Committee's report (para. 28.10). The Twelve considered that the proposals in section 28 should be urgently supplemented by proposals that addressed the Centre's short-term and long-term resource problems. At the same time, they agreed with the Advisory Committee's recommendations for reductions in costs related to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

69. The Twelve questioned the inclusion of section 28 among those covered by the Advisory Committee's recommendations for general reductions totalling \$145,300, if other sections were exempted. Furthermore, they could not accept the recommendation for a reduction of \$188,100 in general temporary assistance (A/46/7, para. 28.15), because the Advisory Committee failed to provide any justification for it. The entire provision for general temporary assistance was necessary for the activities programmed, which could not be undertaken without the means to implement them. The amounts involved were relatively small and the effectiveness of the Centre would be seriously impaired if the recommended reductions were endorsed.

70. In conclusion, the Twelve would address the issue of resources for the World Conference on Human Rights when the Secretariat had provided the additional information expected.

71. Mr. KARBUCZKY (Hungary) said that his delegation regretted that human rights had not been included among the five priorities identified by the General Assembly. His Government attached the greatest importance to human rights questions, and, accordingly, to section 28 of the proposed programme budget.

72. With regard to paragraph 28.12 of the Advisory Committee's report, he asked for an explanation of the background to the situation, and why the Advisory Committee had approved the posts referred to in paragraph 28.13 on a temporary basis only. In paragraph 28.15 the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction in general temporary assistance of \$188,100. His delegation did not think that any reduction in temporary assistance was acceptable, since it provided flexibility in priority areas, such as the administration of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Advisory Services and Technical Assistance in the Field of Human Rights, the operation of which had been hampered by a lack of staff. Estimates under section 28 accounted for only 4 per cent of the total, a modest amount given the importance of human rights questions and the increased workload of the Centre for Human Rights. His delegation agreed with earlier speakers that there was an urgent need to find a long-term solution to the problem of adequate staffing for the Centre.

73. Mr. ELDEEB (Egypt) said that all delegations thought the question of human rights important, given which the Committee might bear in mind the new developments that had taken place since the end of the cold war. For example, his delegation considered the work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories to be extremely important. The General Assembly and Security Council had adopted many resolutions indicating the role to be played by the Organization in protecting the human rights of the Palestinian people, and it was important to support programmes to that end under the regular budget. It was not enough to rely on extrabudgetary resources. His delegation hoped that the Fifth Committee would take account of the importance of those activities in considering section 28.

74. Mr. ONWUALIA (Nigeria) said that his delegation supported the work of the Centre for Human Rights. Nevertheless he noted that growth for activities under section 28 was higher than for those relating to development, to which the Assembly had given priority. His delegation would comment on the question of staffing in the informal consultations.

75. Mr. WU Gang (China) said that adequate resources were needed under section 28, but his delegation was sceptical with regard to the real rate of growth of 10.9 per cent and the proposed establishment of 17 new posts, in comparison with the growth rates proposed under areas identified as priorities. Specifically he questioned the need for new posts at the Centre for Human Rights, given that additional posts had been authorized in the previous biennium.

76. His delegation concurred in the Advisory Committee's comments in paragraph 28.9 of its report concerning posts in respect of the International

(Mr. Wu Gang, China)

Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. He noted that expenditures arising in connection with the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 would be considered following submission of the report of the Preparatory Committee, which should also deal with the cost of holding regional meetings.

77. Mr. BELHAJ (Tunisia) said that his delegation regretted the failure to identify human rights as a priority area, and considered section 28 to be of great importance. He understood that the question of establishing posts under section 28 would be considered in the informal consultations to be held on the establishment of posts in general, and that the question of the workload of the Centre for Human Rights would also be dealt with in informal consultations.

78. His delegation concurred in the view of the Advisory Committee regarding the World Conference on Human Rights. His delegation also supported funding for the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, since human rights could not be enforced selectively. Obviously once the occupied territories were no longer occupied there would be no need for such funding, and in that connection his delegation hoped that recent political initiatives would bear fruit. He trusted that the Committee would reach a consensus on section 28 in a spirit of flexibility.

79. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that the financial implications of the rate of real growth of 10.9 per cent were limited given that the resource base under section 28 was small. The growth was accounted for by the establishment of new posts, which her delegation fully supported. In particular, she noted the proposal to convert four Professional and four General Service posts from general temporary assistance to established posts, in connection with activities that were recurrent but approved on a time-limited basis, but was of the view that the proposal might make it impossible for the Centre for Human Rights to continue its activities in the area of fact-finding, missions and special procedures at the current work level. If that proved to be the case, her delegation would prefer the funding of the eight posts from additional resources rather than by means of conversion from general temporary assistance. In that connection she could not accept the reduction in general temporary assistance proposed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 28.15 of its report.

80. The Advisory Committee's proposals for the establishment of posts in connection with the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families were acceptable. She observed that the estimates for the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus were the same in real terms as in the previous biennium. While noting that that Committee had not yet submitted the workload analysis requested of it, her delegation did not support the de facto freezing of its resources. Lastly, she would comment on the funding for the World Conference on Human Rights once specific estimates were available.

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81. Mr. GREGG (Australia) said that his delegation endorsed the comments made by the representatives of Norway and the Netherlands with regard to the importance of human rights issues. Despite the difficulty of reconciling divergent views on such questions, he trusted that it would be possible to reach a compromise on section 28.

82. Ms. BEAULIEU (Canada) said that her delegation also endorsed the statements made by Norway and the Netherlands. Her delegation would comment in the informal consultations on the issues raised.

83. Ms. DOWSETT (New Zealand) said that it was essential for the Centre for Human Rights to have the necessary resources given the importance of human rights programmes. Accordingly her delegation supported the appropriations proposed under section 28. The reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee under the section must be reconsidered. Nevertheless, her delegation accepted the Advisory Committee's comments in paragraphs 28.9, 28.16, 28.17 and 28.20 of its report, concerning the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus.

84. Mr. RAE (India) said that activities on human rights, while important, should not be funded at the expense of other activities of equal importance. Although human rights questions were not among the five priorities, section 28 had the highest rate of real growth, at 10.9 per cent, in the proposed programme budget, while extrabudgetary resources under the section would increase by some 30 per cent.

85. With regard to the Advisory Committee's comments in respect of the proposed redeployment of a D-1 post from Executive direction and management to the Technical and Information Branch and the establishment of a D-2 post under Executive direction and management (A/46/7, para. 28.7), his delegation did not see that there was a need for each branch to be headed by a chief at the D-1 level or for there to be a D-2 Deputy to the Head of the Centre for Human Rights. With respect to the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, there was no need for posts to be filled prior to entry into force of the Convention. He asked what the Secretariat's expectation of the date of entry into force was. Concerning the proposed establishment of posts in connection with the increased work of the communications procedures section, his delegation preferred to await the Secretary-General's management and workload analysis before supporting the request, but could concur in the Advisory Committee's recommendation regarding the conversion of eight posts from general temporary assistance. Lastly, the Centre for Human Rights should be given the resources it needed. His delegation would comment further in the informal consultations in an effort to promote a consensus.

86. Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom) asked for an explanation of the relationship between rates of real growth and nominal growth under sections 15 and 28.

87. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the conclusion and recommendation of CPC on section 28, as contained in paragraph 350 of its report (A/46/16).

88. It was so decided.

89. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$23,489,600 under section 28 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 was approved in first reading, on the understanding that the issues raised in connection with section 28 would be considered in informal consultations and any necessary adjustments made.

90. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) said that his delegation could concur in the decision taken only because approval in first reading did not constitute final approval. His delegation reserved the right to discuss all the estimates and recommendations pertaining to section 28 in the informal consultations.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.